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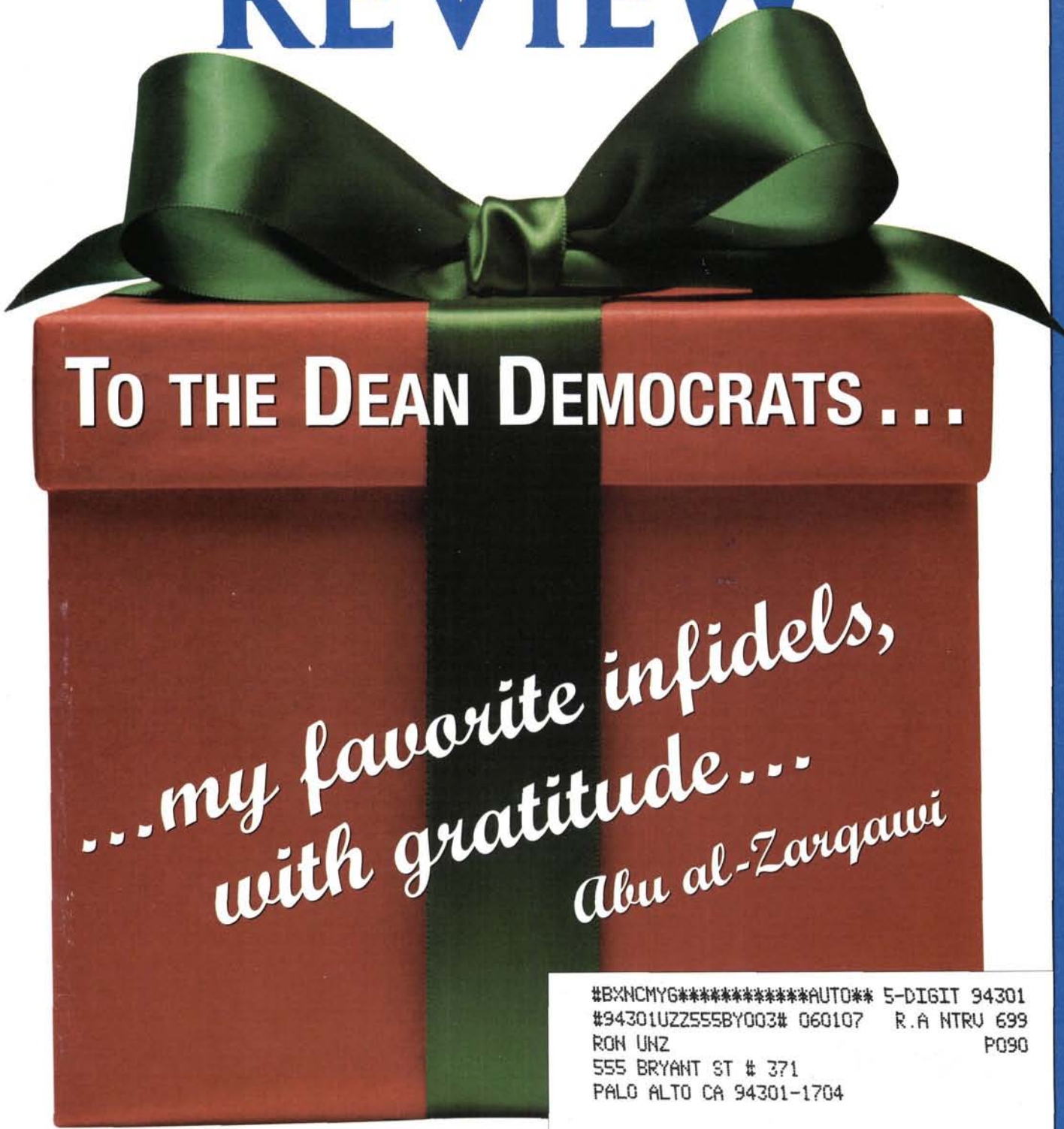

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NATIONAL REVIEW

DECEMBER 31, 2005 VOL. LVII, NO. 24

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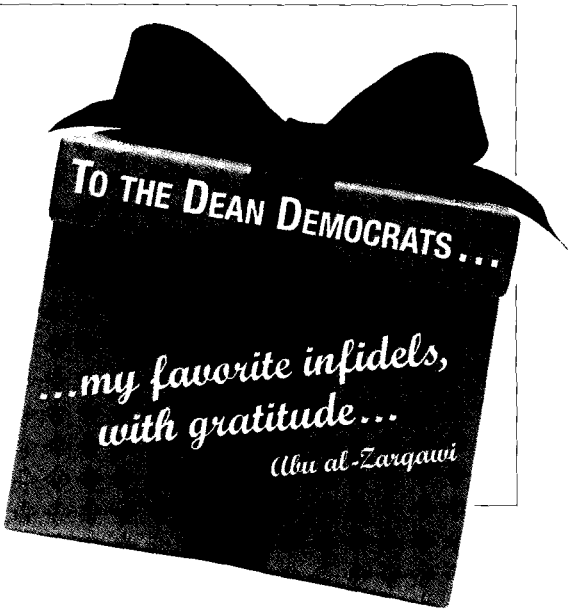
■ **COVER STORY**

Iraq's hearts and minds are operating far more rationally than the Democrats, who these days are both heartless, in their indifference to the aspirations of ordinary Arabs, and mindless, in their calculation of their own best interests. I find Chirac-Schroeder obstructionism easier to understand than the Dean-Boxer variety. *By Mark Steyn*



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Detroit Rep. Joseph J. Colucci 248-626-9918

PUBLISHER & CEO
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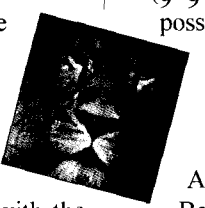
letters to the editor

PARADISE LOST?

John J. Miller's "The Lion King" (Dec. 5) is a fine examination of C. S. Lewis and *The Chronicles of Narnia*, but where Mr. Miller sees promise in the new film adaptation I am not so sure. If we make these stories little more than grist for the mill, we will be like Fellini's peasants in *La Dolce Vita*, who shred a sacred tree in a fit of piety.



I was a confirmed atheist by the age of five, yet I remember many happy hours spent with the Pevensie children: looking for magic doors and dreaming of Cair Paravel. The stories, sprung from the Celtic imagination, are undoubtedly Christian. Yet Narnia lies also in the Romantic tradition. The English willingness to see magic in a bank of rushes or a reedy pool infuses the writing of Spenser and Chaucer, and later authors like Shakespeare, Coleridge, and the Victorians. Narnia, like the Forest of Arden, is a landscape of the imagination.

My fear is that the delicate sensibility with which Lewis conjured his paradise may be lost in an overblown Hollywood production. Though Mr. Miller is optimistic for the Narnia film franchise, I am afraid that the inevitable onslaught of action figures, games, and candy will obscure the lessons which the author tenderly conveyed. These were small lessons for good English boys and girls, about truthfulness and the dangers of eating too much Turkish delight; and they are still learned best on a parent's knee before bedtime.

Can we not leave these beloved volumes where they belong: up on a shelf near the fireplace, waiting for young minds to fall under their spell?

Kate Hill
Astoria, N.Y.

NUMBERS GAME

Alexander Rose is incorrect when he writes that there are around 6 sextillion (6 million trillion) possible permutations for Sudoku ("Eighty-One Squares, Oh Joy," Nov. 21). This is not a "combination" problem. If it were, the formula would be ${}_{81}C_{81}$. It is a "permutation" problem. Each of the nine squares can be arranged in ${}_9P_9$ (362,880) ways, and there are nine of them, so $9x_9P_9$. Once that is disposed of, the nine 3x3 squares can be arranged ${}_9P_9$ ways. So the overall formula is $9x({}_9P_9{}^2)$, which yields 1,185,130,000 possible solutions. Was Rose snoozing in his math class?

Keir Boyd
Davidsonville, Md.

ALEXANDER ROSE REPLIES: Mr. Boyd is quite right to insinuate that I was asleep during math classes—he might also have added Divinity and "Physical Education"—but according to my in-depth, three-minute-long research at a Wikipedia page devoted to this subject ("Mathematics of Sudoku"), "the number of ways of filling in a blank Sudoku grid was shown in May 2005 to be 6,670,903,752,021,072,936,960," which is the number I originally gave. It really doesn't matter, though: I still can't do one of the infernal things.

A GOOD QUESTION

I was very interested in Byron York's examination of the opprobrium directed at Wal-Mart from so many quarters ("Panic in a Small Town," Dec. 5). There is one glaring question that Wal-Mart's detractors never answer: What would the 1.3 million Wal-Mart employees now be doing for a living had the company never come into existence? Are we really to believe they'd all be happily toiling away for high wages in pre-Wal-Mart mom 'n' pop stores?

Tom McCort
New Troy, Mich.

HONORABLE ERROR

I would like to bring to your attention a small error in "The Week" on Rosa Parks's passing (Nov. 21). Because Mrs. Parks was not a government or military figure, she did not "lie in state" at the Capitol, as reported. Rather, she lay in *honor*, a right and fitting tribute to a national hero.

Mark A. Snider
Columbus, Ohio

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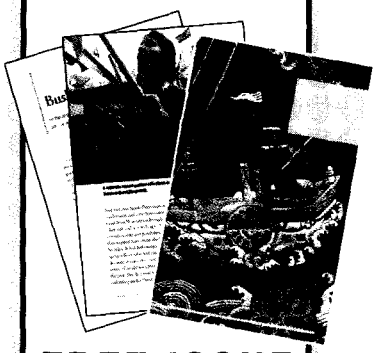

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Sleepwalking Moralists

Present-day moralists lecture the civilized but ignore the brutes.

To paraphrase the ancient Greeks, it is easy to be moral in your sleep. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other global humanitarian groups recently expressed criticism over the slated trial of the accused mass murderer Saddam Hussein. Such self-appointed auditors of moral excellence were worried that his legal representation was inadequate. Or perhaps they felt the court of the new Iraqi democracy was not quite up to the standards of wigged European judges in The Hague. Relay those concerns to the nearly one million silent souls butchered by Saddam's dictatorship. Once they waited in vain for any such international human rights organizations to stop the murdering. None could or did. Sleepwalking moralizers chastise those who listen and are civilized—but see nothing, hear nothing, and speak nothing about those in the moral abyss.

—Victor Davis Hanson

Back to the USSR

They've gotten used to freedom, so why do Russians still yearn for the old days?

Is Putin's long-run aim to restore the old Soviet Union? Russians always insist that it would be impossible to turn back the clock. Yet there is a discernible nostaligia for the terrible simplification of the old days. One recent poll found that 53 percent of Russians still regard Stalin as a great leader. The explanation is not far to seek: The collapse of communism has meant a dramatic decline in living standards. Since 1989, the Russian mortality rate has risen from below 11 per 1,000 to more than 15 per 1,000—nearly double the American rate. Whether Putin can raise living standards as quickly as they have been raised in China is a moot point. But what he can undoubtedly give Russians is a sense of geopolitical revival.

—Niall Ferguson

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THE WEEK

■ Haven't you noticed that everyone in the Washington bubble thinks Bush is in a bubble?

■ Saddam Hussein, his bushy beard and off-the-rack suit making him look like a crazed accountant, shouts and points during his Baghdad trial. The media, like a motion sensor, follow his antics. Too bad, considering the testimony that has been offered by ordinary Iraqis about a massacre of 148 Shiite men and boys in Dujail, north of Baghdad, in 1982. Jawad Abdul-Azziz Jawad had three brothers killed by security forces. Ahmad Hassan Muhammad lost seven brothers; one brother was given electric shocks in the presence of their 77-year-old father; he saw a young boy thrown out of a window, and a meat grinder with blood and human hair under it. "You people of Dujail, we have disciplined Iraq through you," a Baathist officer told him. The judge must control his courtroom; he is not there to produce an opera, but to present the truth, to Iraq and the world. The Dujail massacre is only the first chapter. Put Saddam, like his predecessor Eichmann, in a glass booth, and let the facts be presented to a candid world.

■ Sen. Joe Lieberman, lonely voice of Democratic sanity on the Iraq War, may have a challenger in 2006—former senator Lowell Weicker, the incumbent he ousted in 1988. Weicker's issue would be Iraq, though his personality transcends issues. *Fustian*: "The Democratic silence has been deafening on this for the past two years." Weicker has always been the enemy of silence. *Egomania*: "I feel so deeply about how wrong this war is that I'm perfectly willing to lay my neck on the block." American servicemen and Iraqi civilians are being murdered by terrorist bombs, but Weicker applies the lethal metaphor to himself. *Radicalism, blurred by confusion*: "We [should] get out of Iraq. I'm not going to tell you it should be on February 16 or something, but six months to a year, we're out." Six months or a year is June or December 2006, which are as definite as February 2006—just what the Left and the jihadists want. Weicker hasn't changed, but neither have we. BuckPac beat him once, and can do it again.

■ California is home to 36 million people, but apparently none of them is a Republican who is also qualified to serve as chief of staff to the governor—or so it would seem, based on Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's bizarre decision to hire Susan Kennedy as his top aide. For conservatives who believe that personnel is policy, the move is deeply troubling: Kennedy previously ran California's Democratic state party, worked as a professional abortion-rights advocate, and served as a top aide to recalled Democratic governor Gray Davis. Since 2003, she has donated thousands of dollars to the likes of Howard Dean, Barbara Boxer, and Nancy Pelosi. Pulling her into Schwarzenegger's inner circle is widely seen as a response to

ROMAN GENN

'Show' trial

the multiple defeats the governor suffered at the ballot box in November, when voters rejected a series of reform initiatives that he had pushed. Democrats are still crowing over those results, and hoping they serve as harbingers for next year, when Schwarzenegger himself must face the electorate. If Kennedy really believes in the administration she now serves, as she claims, then perhaps her first piece of advice should be to warn the governor that conservatives will want to have reasons for supporting him.

■ In 1979 Stanley Tookie Williams murdered Albert Owens, Yen-I Yang, Tsai-Shai Chen Yang, and Yu-Chin Yang Lin in two robberies. Owens was a 7-Eleven clerk, the Yangs ran a motel; the robberies netted a total of $220, or $55 per victim. Arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death, Williams wrote some children's books preaching against gang violence, but refused to "rat out" the Crips gang, which he had founded before his murder spree. Celebrity sympathizers—Snoop Dogg, Bianca Jagger—pleaded for clemency, but Governor Schwarzenegger found that "the facts do not justify overturning the jury's verdict or the decisions of the courts in this case." Williams was executed, 26 years after he killed four innocents.

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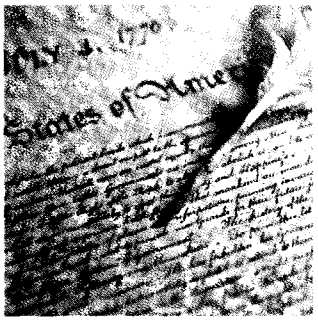

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Publius Fellowships will be awarded to highly qualified college seniors, recent college graduates, and graduate students pursuing careers in politics, scholarship, or journalism. Stipend and travel expenses included. **Application deadline: March 10, 2006**

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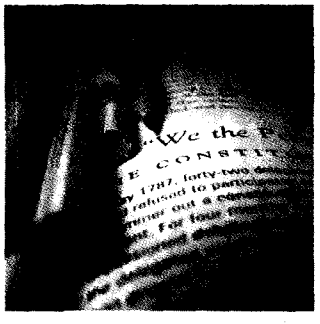
As its name implies, the Lincoln Fellows Program places special emphasis on the statesmanship of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln, no less than the American Founders, believed that free government is only possible if it recognizes and protects the equal natural rights of all human beings. Fellows discuss how the statesmanship and political thought of the Founders and Lincoln should guide policymakers today.

Lincoln Fellowships are offered to young professionals serving elected officials or appointed policymakers, as well as staff members of national political parties or non-profit institutions who research and publish on public policy and constitutional issues. Stipend and travel expenses included. **Application deadline: May 5, 2006**



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THE WEEK...

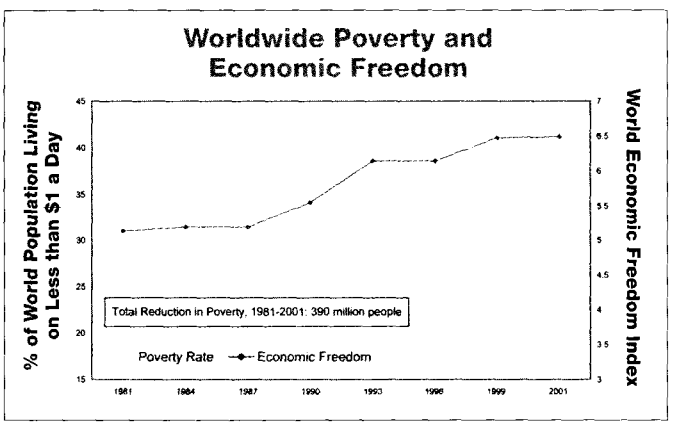
■ Texas judge Pat Priest threw out one of three indictments against Tom DeLay, finding that prosecutor Ronnie Earle, in charging DeLay with conspiring to commit election fraud, misinterpreted the state's election code. Once again acting as though the law shouldn't hinder his relentless campaign against DeLay, Earle has pledged to file an appeal of the dismissal. If the dismissal is upheld—as we suspect it will be—the prosecutor will look like both a lousy lawyer and a partisan hack. (Such suspicions should be strengthened by Earle's tactic of convening a "do over" grand jury to charge DeLay when the original grand jury declined to do so.) Charges of money laundering and conspiracy to launder money remain, but if Earle fails to produce a conviction—as, again, we suspect will be the case—he'll be further discredited. But the prosecutor has one good hope left: If DeLay's colleagues replace him as majority leader before his vindication in court, they will deliver to Earle a victory the law couldn't provide.

■ House and Senate conferees have finally struck a deal to reauthorize all 16 Patriot Act anti-terrorism measures set to expire at the end of this year. Fourteen would be made permanent, demonstrating how essential these tools are—and how empty have been the claims lodged against them by civil-liberties extremists. The conference deal even strengthens privacy protections and improves oversight. But, as we go to press, a small cabal of senators—led by Russ Feingold and with the possible support of his fellow Democrats Dick Durbin and Ken Salazar, as well as Republicans Larry Craig, John Sununu, and Lisa Murkowski—is threatening a filibuster that would derail the reauthorization unless Patriot is signifi-

Reagan the Poverty-Slayer

COMPARISONS of great leaders of the past can provide political junkies with the kind of pleasure that sports fans experience when debating the relative merits of current and past athletes. Could Gale Sayers have succeeded in today's NFL? Was Babe Ruth a better hitter than Barry Bonds? Could Bill Clinton have won the Second World War?

In sports, such discussions often turn on interesting data that shed light on the unappreciated merits of past greats. My favorite example is the remarkable punting ability of Hall of Fame quarterback Sammy Baugh, who in 1940 set the all-time single-season record for average punting distance (51.4 yards).



SOURCES: CHEN AND RAVALLION (2004), FRASER INSTITUTE'S ECONOMIC FREEDOM OF THE WORLD REPORT

Political discussions can turn on the data as well. With the risks of such speculation in mind, here's an interesting question: What world leader was history's greatest champion of the poor? The data overwhelmingly favor a single candidate: Ronald Reagan. The red line in the accompanying graph plots the percentage of the world's population that subsists on less than one dollar per day, a widely accepted measure of extreme poverty. The proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty has plummeted since 1980. Going from percentages to head counts, the numbers are staggering. In 1970, for example, about 1.3 billion people lived in poverty. By 1981, the number had climbed to 1.5 billion. But by 2001, that number dropped to 1.1 billion, even as world population had increased.

It is not just the absolute income of the poor that has improved; their relative share of resources has increased as well. Looking farther back into history, it is possible to cobble together from the literature a measure of income inequality going back to around 1800, and the data present a similar, striking story. World income inequality generally increased from 1800 to about 1980; since then, it has dropped steadily—for the first time in recorded history.

Why have the poor done so much better? An extensive study by Columbia University economist Xavier Sala-i-Martin suggests a simple but convincing story: Formerly Communist and socialist countries recognized the benefits of free markets and loosened their harsh redistributive policies. This market liberalization is reflected in the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World Report, which measures the degree to which policies and institutions support personal choice, voluntary exchange, competition, and private-property rights. From 1981 to 2001, the worldwide average economic-freedom score rose from 5.1 (out of 10) to 6.5. This increase in economic freedom, the blue line, led to the astonishing economic growth that has made almost everyone, especially the poor, better off. Just think of the change in circumstances over the past 20 years for the typical resident of China, India, or the former Soviet Union.

There is little doubt that the leading proponent of this transformation was Ronald Reagan. Without him, the U.S. itself would likely still be shackled by punitive tax rates and Kafkaesque regulation. Instead, freedom has advanced at home and spread abroad. By promoting free markets, Reagan freed more from poverty than anyone else in history.

He championed the poor even better than Sammy Baugh punted.

—KEVIN A. HASSETT

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cantly watered down. Other Democrats are suggesting a three-month renewal—hoping to weaken the act without appearing to oppose it. In doing so, they play brinksmanship with our national security. The Patriot Act is both reasonable and necessary, and has produced no record of government abuse. It should be reauthorized at once.

■ Pay attention now, technically challenged readers. There are two common ways to transmit masses of information: analog and digital. Analog transmission uses waves, the information coded by varying the waves' frequency (how many times per second the wave goes from peak to trough) or amplitude (the height or depth of peaks and troughs). Digital information is a stream of zeros and ones, offs and ons. Why should you care? Because the nation's TV broadcasts will change from all-analog to all-digital by April 2009. If you are one of the 85 percent of Americans getting TV via cable or satellite, you are already digital-capable. If not, you can buy a converter gadget for less than $100. And guess what? Congress has passed legislation that will give you a voucher to cover most of the cost! George Will calls this "No Couch Potato Left Behind." We would like to name it the "Affirmation of Spending Insanity Act." Whatever the name, it is another illustration that the notion of fiscal restraint is now, in the minds of our legislators, as antiquated and irrelevant as the phlogiston theory of combustion.

■ In his brilliant campaign to become leader of Britain's opposition Tories, David Cameron avoided categorizing himself ideologically as best he could. He avoided clear economic commitments, for instance, arguing that they would be hostages to fortune four years before an election. But since he had to say something on the central business of government, he promised to divide the fruits of economic growth between the taxpayer and public services. Given that the last eight years under New Labour has seen a massive increase in the public sector, public spending, and regulation, this pledge was disappointingly modest. Cameron has been defended by some conservatives on the grounds that his statements are less policy commitments than cultural signals. They signify he is a Nice man who intends to transform his Nasty party by embracing the cuddly policies important to Britain's chattering classes and media elite. His attempt to outflank Tony Blair on the left by advocating even stricter Kyoto-style regulation of carbon emissions certainly fits that interpretation. And his first appointments—mainly Tory Left grandees—confirm it. Now, Cameron himself is a work in progress. He has some conservative instincts that may triumph over these early calculations. But this project to transform the Tory party culturally has large drawbacks. It threatens to saddle the party with soft-interventionist social and economic policies at the very moment when the voters are likely to be rebelling against Labour's rising taxes and failing services. It presents the Tories as soft and cuddly at a time when bombs are going off in the London subway and urban centers are racked by hooliganism. And it disenfranchises conservative Middle England

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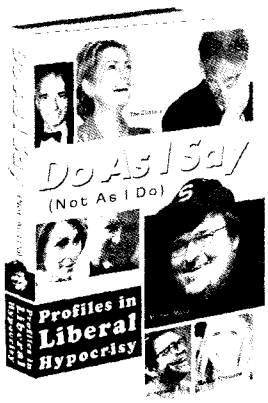

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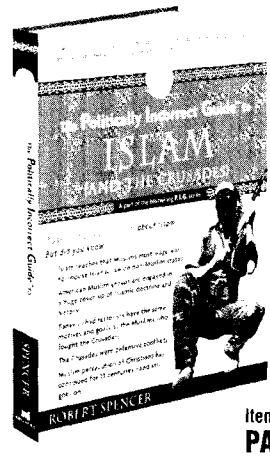

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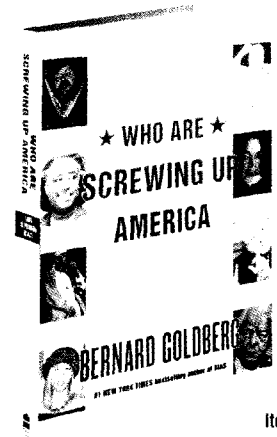

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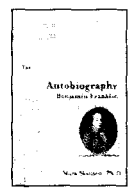

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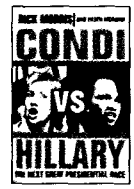

Condi vs. Hillary—There is absolutely no doubt whatsoever that Hillary will be the Democratic nominee in 2008. And in a surprising but compelling analysis, Dick Morris details why only Condi Rice can defeat her—and save us from a President Hillary who would almost certainly unleash far more Leftist havoc upon America than her randy husband ever dreamed of doing.
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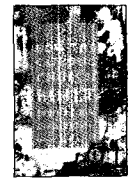

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THE WEEK...

at a time when tough-minded realism (aka nastiness) may seem the appropriate political attitude. In short, when the kissing has to stop, will Niceness be enough?

■ The Syrian regime has long specialized in violence tempered with deception and lies. This deadly mixture is now in full swing. President Bashar Assad has evidently decided that he would rather be a dictator than introduce any sort of change, never mind reform. So he is playing around with the U.N. investigators into the murder of onetime Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri, which everyone, including the United Nations, believes he masterminded. Critics and dissidents have been rounded up. One among them, Dr. Kamal Labwani, was arrested at Damascus Airport as he flew in from Paris. This prompted the White House to put out a strong statement for the release of all prisoners of conscience, naming nine of them, including Labwani. Nobody doubts that the Bashar regime is also responsible for the latest outrage, the murder of Gibran Tueni in Beirut. Tueni was the publisher of *An-Nahar*, one of the very best Arabic newspapers, a fine journalist himself, and a national figure who campaigned against the stranglehold that Syria had on his country. He was killed by a bomb the day after he too had flown in from Paris. It's time for sanctions, and it wouldn't do any harm if an armored column were to enter the country from Iraq in pursuit of terrorists.

■ If even Mohamed ElBaradei—director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and latest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize—says that the "international community" is "losing patience" with Iran over its nuclear program, well, the mullahs must really be out of line. Let's do a little summing up. There was President Ahmadinejad's recent comment that if the Holocaust *had* happened—which, naturally, it didn't—the Zionist entity ought to exist on European rather than Middle Eastern soil. (It was rather sporting of him to grant the Jews a place on *somebody*'s map, seeing as he'd previously called for them to be wiped off the map *simpliciter*.) Then there was the meeting of the Iranian foreign minister with the leaders of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah—for the noble purpose of coordinating a united front against Israel. Anything else? Oh yes: that whole nuclear-weapons thing. ElBaradei says that if Iran starts enriching uranium—something it gives every signal of intending to do—it could have a bomb within months. It's time to abandon once and for all the fiction that the mullahs can be negotiated with, and devote ourselves instead to removing them from power.

■ President Hosni Mubarak has ruled Egypt by emergency decree for over 20 years, and after recent parliamentary elections is in a position to continue in power for another six years, by which time he will be well into his eighties. Rumor on the street is that his son Gamal will succeed him. And that's the Arab predicament in a nutshell: Absolute power has corrupted absolutely. Alternatives to Mubarak exist. One is the small but vigorous democratic movement led by Ayman Nour—Mubarak trumped up charges to run him into prison. Another is the Muslim Brotherhood, a mass movement that claims to be overcoming its propensity for Islamist violence. Safeguarding himself in the usual style, Mubarak put his secret police to work. By the time they had finished with their chicanery and use of force, they had shot eight people (ten in some reports) and stolen the election. The United States pays out two billion dollars a year to Mubarak, and should require better value for the money. Ultimate Muslim Brotherhood success would be a threat to one and all, and one way to bring it about is to go on behaving as though Mubarak were a legitimate ruler.

■ The news from Afghanistan is good, which is why the media have gone quiet on it. Of course. Even for the doomsayers and Bush-haters, progress is unmistakable. Almost three quarters of the voters turned out for the unprecedented general election, and for the first time parliament meets on December 19. President Hamid Karzai has powers to appoint a proportion of its members, and wisely he has drafted tribal warlords and provincial governors who outside the political process might have relapsed into bad old ways. The move to disarm those who menace peace and security is highly popular. A recent poll carried out by Afghans gives Karzai a positive job rating of 83 percent. A similar percentage of Afghans express a favorable opinion of the United States, and 87 percent hold that the overthrow of the Taliban was a good thing. This compares with a mere 8 percent rate of approval for the Taliban today, and 5 percent for Osama bin Laden. And only 8 percent again think that the United States should leave now. A bit more reporting on this faraway country might raise President Bush's numbers in the direction of President Karzai's.

■ In a speech before students at the University of Havana, Fidel Castro taunted Gov. Jeb Bush as fat. From the look of Castro's prisoners—he likes his men very slim indeed.

■ For more than a decade, a bipartisan group of anti-Communists has hacked its way through a thicket of federal bureaucracy to build a memorial in Washington dedicated to the 100 million people who died in Communism's wars, revolutions, and purges. At long last, the Victims of Communism Memorial—a ten-foot-tall bronze statue based on the

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THE WEEK...

"Goddess of Democracy" erected in China's Tiananmen Square in 1989—is on the verge of becoming a reality. By this time next year, it may stand on a site within eyeshot of the U.S. Capitol. Before that can happen, however, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation must raise a little more money to meet its $700,000 budget. The effort has received a handful of large donations from businessman Thomas L. Phillips and the Pew Charitable Trusts, but much of its support has come through small donations from the likes of Vietnamese Americans in northern Virginia. If you want to help out as well, the foundation accepts contributions by mail (1521 Sixteenth Street NW, Washington, D.C., 20036) and on its website (www.victimsofcommunism.org).

■ Howard Stern's move to satellite radio places him beyond the reach of the Federal Communications Commission, which has fined his broadcasters $2.5 million over the years. Technology, the market, and the law have thus conspired to create the ideal niche for him and his fans. How sad that there should be so many of the latter. Though Howard Stern is 51 years old, he is forever 15. Porn, excrement, rock music, shame, and provocation define his universe. He is, literally, a bad boy: His boyishness limits his vices, but his badness prevents him from ever being a man. The republic has survived the deer tick, it will survive him.

■ Under the heading "Life Imitates Parody," a Nobel Prize–winning Italian Communist clown has written a play entitled *Peace Mom* that depicts Cindy Sheehan's valiant anti-war efforts. The clown in question is Dario Fo, who made his name as a mime before graduating to literary eminence. No satirist could have dreamt this up. His play, which debuted in London to cap off a day of anti-war protests, is a one-woman show wherein the actress recites lines from Sheehan's collected writings. According to the *Guardian*, "The play is a monologue, a tapestry of Sheehan's letters to Bush." Sheehan herself was on hand for the opening, where she told reporters that the production "did an amazing job of conveying my feeling of anger and betrayal." She then reminded them, "Casey [her son, a slain Army specialist] was honorable and brave and sweet, and he was murdered by the Bush family." Before departing for the evening, she paused for a moment's reflection, concluding, "My whole life is surreal and bizarre." And she's telling us?

■ The inherent contradiction between the two modern notions of "hate speech" and "identity pride" showed up the other day in San Francisco, when a group of lesbian motorcycle enthusiasts persuaded the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to award them rights to the phrase "Dykes on Bikes." The feds had twice turned down the group's application on grounds that "dyke" is an offensive and derogatory word. Well, is it or isn't it? Is this one of these zones, as with the N-word, where a victim group may freely use the term, but the oppressor group may not? The biker group's attorney declared that the awarding of this trademark was "a major change in the recognition of people's rights to be out and proud and call themselves what they want to." Fair enough; but what should others call them?

■ The American Legislative Exchange Council gives a very nice award: the Warren Brookes Award for Excellence in Journalism, named after the late columnist of the *Detroit News* (and other papers), who was an eloquent champion of free markets, honest inquiry, and human dignity. And the council has made a very nice choice this year: Kate O'Beirne. Even if we do say so ourselves. KO'B is our Washington editor, and a favorite nationwide. The nation is right, and so is the American Legislative Exchange Council, and we say: hurrah.

■ Former senator Eugene McCarthy died, age 89. He was a man of intelligence, grace, and wit. As an amateur poet, he pursued the muse gallantly despite her evident reluctance to be courted by him. Yet two serious matters must be laid to his account. In his later years he became a Harold Stassen figure, making preposterous runs for the White House. This fit the reality-show aspect of recent presidential campaigning, which draws the hopeless and the worthless (Revs. Jackson and Sharpton, Pats Robertson and Buchanan). More seriously, his 1968 challenge to President Lyndon Johnson ended 70 years of American foreign-policy consensus, from the Spanish–American War to Vietnam. His anti-war run, aped by Robert Kennedy, injected isolationism and defeatism into national politics, and the Democratic party. He lost that race, but his legacy marches on. R.I.P.

■ Comes Christmas, with the Christmas wars. What do you call the trees in front of town halls? What do you say to acquaintances or passersby? What do sales clerks say to you? The season is so bound with the birth of Christ that the two are impossible to disentangle, even conceptually: Santa Claus was a 4th-century bishop and saint; the holidays (as in "Happy Holidays") are holy days, which must give the evangelical atheist pause. Businesses eager not to give offense, lawyers eager to litigate, enemies of custom eager to bleach and flatten all do their best to grind the day down. But if we keep it in our homes and churches, and, most important, in our hearts and our actions, then we will know when to keep it with our lips.

AT WAR

'Torture' and Interrogation

JOHN MCCAIN has been leading a debate that will allow Congress to bask in the glow of "ending torture" without doing any difficult grappling with the questions raised by our interrogation policy.

The "torture" debate has been so confused because it lacks agreed-upon terms. Everyone knows that "torture" is illegal, banned under the U.N. Convention Against Torture (CAT). The U.S. is a signatory to that treaty. The Bush administration maintains that, as a matter of policy, it also applies CAT's other prohibition, against "cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment" (CID), to its handling of detainees overseas.

So, what is torture? Under CAT and U.S. law, it is the inflic-

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The Signing of the Declaration of Independence, detail, by John Trumbull.

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tion of "severe pain or suffering." Bush critics like to ignore the word "severe" and pretend that subjecting a detainee to *any* pain is torture. It is not. While most people instinctively know what they consider torture—fingernails pulled out, electric shocks, beatings—defining what rises to the level of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment is a trickier question.

Congress should define which practices it finds acceptable and which it doesn't. But all the McCain amendment does is apply the CID prohibition to our actions overseas, which the administration—at least by its own lights—is already doing. It also codifies the interrogation policies contained in the Army Field Manual. Those policies were geared to dealing with legitimate prisoners of war and, correctly, are tightly formulated to allow only such unaggressive methods as "psychological ploys" and "verbal trickery."

What, then, do McCain and his colleagues think of those methods that aren't included in the manual but don't necessarily constitute CID? That's the key question. Given the way the debate is now playing out, if McCain's amendment becomes law it will be interpreted as banning almost every coercive interrogation technique. In dealing with captured terrorists, we will then be able to apply only methods formulated to deal with legitimate soldiers in a conventional war. This is folly.

A more sensible approach would be for Congress to work its way through interrogation practices, starting with the least controversial. Is dietary manipulation "cruel"? Are cold rooms? Is sensory deprivation? Is being made to stand for hours? How about an "attention grab," i.e., shaking a detainee? Sleep deprivation? A belly slap? We think these methods would all pass muster in any rational debate, provided they are applied within reason (there is a difference between standing for two hours and twenty hours).

Then Congress could make its way to the most aggressive techniques, such as water-boarding, which simulates drowning. It has reportedly been effective in breaking high-level al-Qaeda detainees within seconds, but it is at least close to the line of what constitutes torture, and is certainly "cruel" in almost every circumstance.

Circumstances matter. Even some of the most fervent backers of McCain, including McCain himself, say we should torture someone in a ticking-bomb scenario, where saving a U.S. city depended on doing so. Such scenarios are unlikely in the extreme, but there are other exceptional cases that are more probable: for instance, the capture of a top-level al-Qaeda operative who may have knowledge of a coming attack or the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden.

To deal with such cases, the president should be able to sign a finding—on the model of a finding authorizing an assassination—to use an extraordinary method like water-boarding. The definition of CID depends on context. While water-boarding may be unacceptably cruel if applied to 69,990 of the roughly 70,000 people we've detained since the War on Terror began, there are perhaps ten top-level captives in whose cases water-boarding doesn't "shock the conscience," to employ the phrase often used in defining CID.

All of this would amount to a three-tiered system. The Army Field Manual would govern how we handle most captives. More coercive techniques would be available for terrorists who aren't conventional POWs and might have important intelligence. Finally, the president could go even further in rare circumstances. This is a system that would be suited to the complex environment presented by the War on Terror, one in which intelligence is paramount and not to be forfeited lightly. It would eliminate most of the ambiguity inherent in the current debate, and get Congress to stop carping from the sidelines and put itself on record endorsing a clear set of interrogation policies.

Alas, instead we are getting congressional preening and what will amount to a ban on all coercive interrogations—an outcome we will come to regret.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The next issue of NATIONAL REVIEW will appear in four weeks.

AT WAR II

The Will to Lose

A YEAR before the mid-term elections, Democrats are positioning themselves as the anti-war party. Most prominent was Rep. John Murtha, a former Marine and Vietnam vet. In emotional interviews and press releases, Murtha said that the Army was "broken," and called for "immediately redeploy[ing]" it from Iraq after the December 15 vote there. The party leadership quickly followed Murtha. House minority leader Nancy Pelosi said "the president has dug us into a deep hole in Iraq; it is time for him to stop digging." Howard Dean, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, said: "The idea that we're going to win the war in Iraq is an idea which is just plain wrong." "Democrats in Congress," according to Senate minority leader Harry Reid, "are saying we have to get out. It's a question of whether it's 6 months or 10 months or 12 months or 18 months." A few Democrats dissented: Sen. Joseph Lieberman wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* that it would be "a colossal mistake . . . to choose this moment in history to lose [our] will," but he was shouting into the wind.

In part the Democrats are hoping to take advantage of actions long planned by the Bush administration, which they can depict as failures of its policies. If the Iraqi army becomes more capable of holding territory after anti-terrorist sweeps, American forces could be drawn down; Murtha, Pelosi, et al. could then say they crowed up the sun. This is a perfect situation for politicians who are both timid and opportunistic: criticizing the status quo while profiting from it. Sen. George Aiken said, during the Vietnam War, that we should declare victory and pull out. The Democrats want to pull out and declare defeat.

But the Democrats' anti-war fever is more than partisan trend-spotting. It also arises from the poisonous interaction of modern liberalism and the anti-American Left. This interaction is decades old. The Vietnam War was opposed by a ragtag of homemade and dogmatic radicals. But they drew on legions of

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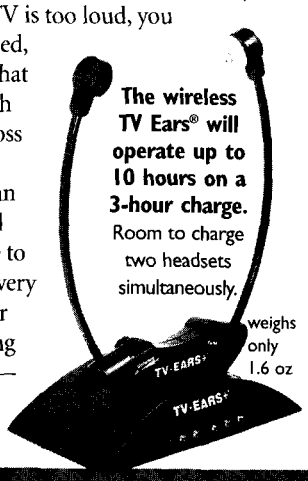

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college kids who didn't want to be drafted. Now that the chicken-chickens are grey heads, they can still have their buttons pushed by dedicated anti-warriors. The hard Left opposed the liberation of Afghanistan, and liberals were getting ready, in the late fall of 2001, to declare the project a quagmire. The collapse of the Taliban government prevented that consummation, but the long Iraq war has brought liberals once more to the bridal chamber.

Comparing ourselves to the Greatest Generation, we think of Americans as having once been united in wartime. But this is not true. Early American warmaking was marked by civil strife (the American Revolution), secessionist plots (the War of 1812), and heavy desertion (the Mexican War). The Civil War was sheer fratricide. From the sinking of the *Maine* to the Korean War, Americans did stand together once fighting started, however much they quarreled beforehand. But beginning in Vietnam the older pattern resumed—with an important difference. The early republic's clashes occurred in a young nation, still unsure of its identity. Today's defeatism is confusion, fed by self-hatred.

notes & asides

■ *To: Beloved readers, friends*
Re: Notes & Asides

I regretfully conclude that Notes & Asides can't continue as a regular feature of National Review. *The reason is: We aren't getting enough letters that qualify as N&A material—inquisitive, zany, confused, annoyed, piquant. The feature has had a very good run, nearly 40 years, and has also served as repository for my own material—speeches, obituaries, journal entries. But we won't close down the column; merely run it when there is material at hand. We trust you will be disappointed, and our thanks for all that you have done over so many years to maintain its lively life.*

Buckleys Chris and Bill

We close the regular feature with, appropriately, my farewell appearance—at my 80th-birthday party at the Pierre Hotel in New York, on November 17.

Ladies and gentlemen, Christo, Bill Rusher, Jeff Hart,

About ten years ago, a thoughtful group of people convened in my honor at the behest of the Museum of Radio and Television. Their tribute was extensive and generous. Then, at the end of an evening already long, my turn came. What I did was point my finger at the participating principals, who were Mike Wallace and George Plimpton, Taki Theodoracopulos and Bill vanden Heuvel, my son Christopher and Bob Batscha; and then at the crowded but wilting dining room. I said that the only way I could hope to compensate their kindness would be to decline so much as to enumerate the names of those to whom I owed thanks, let alone describe their contributions. The alternative—to single out everyone who had had a hand in the event—would have made for an even longer evening.

It actually crossed my mind to try the same dodge here tonight, with you. But I didn't have the nerve. At my age, you can't get away with youthful unseemliness, let alone trip lightly over profound indebtedness. Perhaps, before leaving the scene finally, I should compose a doxology, useful on public occasions, recitable at the close of ceremonies, and no less sincere for having been written out, like the Lord's Prayer.

If I had undertaken to write out doxological expressions of praise and gratitude, the requirements of brevity—one can, after all, go on for just so long—would have exercised a useful disciplinary effect. One thinks of limitations placed even on the number of the original disciples. And even there, one of their number turned out to be a security risk. I doubt that Bill vanden Heuvel would happily be reminded of his remarks about me and my work made ten years ago. Certainly he would not want to repeat his testimonial if there was any possibility that his daughter

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would overhear him. She is, of course, the publisher of *The Nation* magazine, which last week announced that for the first time in 147 years, it was generating a profit!

Talk about security risks! The single journal of opinion in all of America which is running a profit is the staunch socialist weekly—whose publisher emeritus every now and then reaffirms his faith in the innocence of Alger Hiss. Maybe if Ed Capano went public with his secret belief in the innocence of Sacco and Vanzetti, that disclosure would have a magical effect on NATIONAL REVIEW's balance sheet. Alternatively, he could take lessons in socialist economic management.

* * *

I am glad I touched on the subject of publishing economics because that induces a moment's reflection on two sets of people.

The first set are most of them dead. They are the 50 or 60 people who stepped forward—I have to admit, after a fair amount of coaxing and even a little firebrand persuasion—to underwrite the appearance of the first issue of NATIONAL REVIEW 50 years ago. My two-year personal money-raising campaign included seven meetings at the home of Morrie Ryskind, the great humorist and furtive conservative thundercloud in Hollywood, transformed into equity salesman for National Review, Incorporated. Those two years brought in pledges of $300,000, supplementing the stake of my father; so we were off, on November 11, 1955, 50 years ago, with a capital subscription of $400,000. This lasted us for almost 18 months.

What happened then introduces the second set of people I have in mind, and some of them are in this room tonight. Willi Schlamm, an expatriate Austrian enthusiast and a founding editor of the magazine, had egged me on through my disconsolation in 1953 and 1954, assuring me that if NATIONAL REVIEW ever actually began publishing and went on to acquire 25,000 readers (!) they would not let us go out of business; and this has proved so. The fortnightly journal that has defended American enterprise and American ideals, and that made sacred the cause of resisting the Soviet Union's anti-historical claims, has lost money year after year, notwithstanding its circulation rise to an out-of-sight 170,000, but it survives.

Our accumulated losses? A round figure would be $25 million—about a half million per year. Our loyal and generous readers have conveyed to us, every year, just about that figure exactly. Indeed, I think there may be an extra-sensory perception at work, guiding our friends to look after only our exact and direst needs. Extra-sensory perception—because we are never with a dollar left over. Even this dinner, and the dinner in Washington last month, were designed to help us stay alive. We are left only to dream of luxurious living in the style of *The Nation*. So that NATIONAL REVIEW's ongoing debt to those who continue to make life possible, and make it possible for our ideals to appear in print and on the Internet, I here, bidding you adieu, acknowledge, with devotion and pride.

* * *

I am required by the iron architecture of this event, designed by Ed Capano and Rich Lowry and Dusty Rhodes, to acknowledge that it is centered on me, as you will have guessed from the recitations of the last hour. I was permitted only to pass my eyes over the scheduled program. The evening is presided over by my funny and productive son, Christopher. At his age, he has published more books than I had done when I was his age. And then the documentary was scripted by Jason Steorts, a gifted young writer who graduated from Harvard a few years ago, going on to explore China and to do missionary work in Brazil before joining our staff.

The two have done their duty in advancing the purpose of the evening, which is to wish me safe passage on my 80th birthday. Their words, added to those of Tim Goeglein and John O'Sullivan, in the glow of music by Alex Donner and the Whiffenpoofs and the Krokodiloes, leave unanswered only the question, Did I also invent octogenarian life?

I didn't do this, in fact. If I had, I'd happily have forsworn it. Eighty years is a very long time. That many years took us from the founding of the Republic to the Civil War. From the beginning of Soviet Communism in 1917, to the end of Soviet Communism in 1991.

For 50 years, NATIONAL REVIEW has been with us. It is bliss to recall in memory the names of those who sustained it, and adorned it. My sister Priscilla and I worked alongside giants and mini-giants. Was anyone taller than Whittaker Chambers? He was there, with James Burnham, and John Dos Passos; and tradition continues safe on the shoulders of Rich Lowry and Jay Nordlinger—pursuant to my pledge, I restrict myself to the mention of only two names per epoch, not counting Richard Brookhiser, but then he began breaking rules at age 15, when he first published with us.

But since I am permitted two names, I pronounce those of Henry Kissinger and Ronald Reagan—what grand company we have kept! And as you have seen and heard, their judgment was that NATIONAL REVIEW accomplished reciprocal work, rising to their level of service to the ideals of the Republic.

Their names are associated with the headlines of the past 50 years. Headliners in my own life as editor are two women, Frances Bronson and Linda Bridges. It is only because they have denied me nothing that I can safely direct them to accept my thanks and my tribute for what they continue to make possible.

What to do after the 80th birthday? I read yesterday in *The Weekly Standard*— an exemplary weekly, hoping to rise, in the years to come, to the status of a fortnightly—a wonderful if poignant reference by Joseph Epstein to a line from Santayana. Notice, I did not say "George" Santayana, which would demean him, rather like coming out with "William" Shakespeare, to make certain which Shakespeare you were talking about. The lines recalled in this wonderful obituary tell us that "the world is so ordered that we must, in a material sense, lose everything we have and love, one thing after another, until we ourselves close our eyes."

Well, but then I have this actuarial reassurance, that however prolonged the forthcoming and inevitable decomposition, I will not be subjected to what would be truly intolerable, namely 50 years without NATIONAL REVIEW. For this I am grateful, as I am to you, for serving as witnesses to this final capitulation, done in your warm and enduring company.

—WFB

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■ AT WAR ■

Obstacle in Chief

Sen. Carl Levin (D., Mich.) does all he can to hamper the administration in the War on Terror

BYRON YORK

THERE are several reasons for the Bush administration to fear—indeed, to dread—the possibility of a Democratic takeover of the Senate in 2006. Chairman Leahy of the Judiciary Committee is one. Chairman Rockefeller of the Intelligence Committee is another. But perhaps the most consequential, at least in terms of national security, would be Chairman Levin of the Armed Services Committee. Just mention the prospect of Sen. Carl Levin, Democrat from Michigan, overseeing the Pentagon—and therefore much of the War on Terror—and it's enough to send a chill down administration spines.

Certainly, there are several Democrats who strongly oppose the administration's national-security policies. But much of that opposition is rhetorical. Levin, on the other hand, works hard to actually block some of those policies. Inside the Bush administration, and among Republicans on Capitol Hill, Levin has won the reputation of being perhaps the chief congressional obstacle to prosecuting the War on Terror.

He has done it in two ways. First, he has put "holds" on key Bush nominees to national-security posts. And second, he has conducted an ongoing bureaucratic war with the Department of Defense, demanding investigations and re-investigations of issues that have already been extensively examined, all in the hope of finding evidence to support his apparently unshakable belief that a neoconservative conspiracy inside the Pentagon led to the war in Iraq.

First the nominees. Although in the minority, Levin enjoys powerful positions on both the Armed Services Committee, where he is the ranking Democrat, and the Intelligence Committee, where he sits beside Senator Rockefeller. In the last nine months, Levin has used his position to block three key national-security nominees. The first is Eric Edelman, chosen by President Bush to be undersecretary of defense for policy (succeeding the controversial Douglas Feith—more on him later). The second is Peter Flory, picked to be assistant secretary of defense for international security policy. And the third is Benjamin Powell, nominated for a top job at the new Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI).

None of them faces any substantive objections from Democrats; they're all qualified candidates who have no problems in their past that would derail their nominations. Instead, Flory and Edelman found themselves blocked because Levin decided to use their nominations as leverage for his demand that the Defense Department provide him with documents about pre-war intelligence. For his part, Powell was blocked as leverage for Levin's demand that the administration give up documents on the treatment of suspected terrorist detainees. (Levin has also blocked the nomination of former ABC News executive Dorrance Smith to be Pentagon spokesman, but for an actual, if somewhat petty, reason: Levin didn't like a newspaper op-ed Smith once wrote.)

In the cases of Flory and Edelman, the Pentagon gave Levin what he wanted—piles and piles and piles of paper—but Levin still was not satisfied. By summer, the issue had become a standoff, so in August, when senators went home on break, President Bush used his recess appointment power to place both Edelman and Flory in office. Powell, however, remains in limbo.

Republicans find his case particularly frustrating, because the job to which he is nominated was created in part because of the demands of Democrats—and now Levin and his colleagues refuse to allow the president to fill it. The establishment of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence was one of the main recommendations of the September 11 commission. During last year's campaign,

DARREN GYGI

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Arabian Fables (II)

More fanciful Arab myths to sway world opinion.

Earlier this year, we published our message, "Arabian Fables (I)," in which we made clear how the Arab propaganda machine creates myths and lies with which to misinform the world. We discussed the myths of the "Palestinians"and of the "West Bank" and the mythical concept of "occupied territories". In today's message, we shall address three more of these myths.

What are some of these myths?

Jerusalem ("Arab East Jerusalem"). The Arabs have assiduously propagated the myths that Jerusalem is an Arab capital, that (after Mecca and Medina) Jerusalem is their third holy city, and that it is intolerable to them that infidels (Jews) are in possession of it.

The reality of course is that Jerusalem was never an Arab capital and that it was, until the Jews revitalized it, a dusty provincial city that hardly played any economic, social, or political role. Jerusalem is mentioned hundreds of times in the Jewish Bible and has been the center of the Jewish faith and the focus of Jewish longing ever since the Romans destroyed the Temple in the early years of the first millennium. Not once is Jerusalem mentioned in the Koran.

> "The Arab propaganda machine has created myths that have been accepted by much of the world. No peace in the Middle East is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are!"

As to "East Jerusalem": There is East Saint Louis, there is East Hampton, and there used to be East Berlin, but, until the Arab propaganda machine created the concept, there was never in history an "East Jerusalem", let alone an "Arab East Jerusalem".

The eastern part of Jerusalem is now predominantly inhabited by Arabs, though their proportion is decreasing. But what is the reason for this? It is because the Jordanians destroyed all traces of Jewish presence from the eastern part of the city and drove all the Jews out during the 19 years (between 1948 and 1967) in which they were in occupation of the eastern part of the city. The world, informed by Arab propaganda, considers those Jews who wish to return to the eastern part of the city to be troublemakers or worse.

The concept of Jerusalem being a holy Arab city and the capital of whatever political entity the "Palestinians" may eventually form is a myth and so of course is the concept of "Arab East Jerusalem".

"Settlements." When Jordan came into possession of Judea/Samaria and the eastern part of Jerusalem, following the invasion of the newly-formed Jewish state, and stayed in occupation for 19 years, it systematically obliterated all Jewish villages in the area under their occupation, drove out the Jewish inhabitants, and left the area "judenrein" (free of Jews)—the first time that concept had been applied since the Nazis created it during their short and bloody reign in Germany. When the Israelis recovered these territories, they rebuilt these villages, created new ones, and built new towns and suburbs to existing cities, especially Jerusalem.

The Arabs decided to call these towns and villages "settlements", with their connotation of illegitimacy and impermanence. The world, including the United States, is much agitated over these population centers and, goaded by the Arabs, declares them to be impediments to peace. What nonsense! Nobody considers the tens of thousands of Arabs who continue to stream to these territories as impediments to peace.

The term "settlements", too, is a propaganda myth created by the Arabs.

"Refugees." In 1948, when six Arab armies invaded the Jewish state in order to destroy it on the very day of its birth, broadcasts by the advancing Arab armies appealed to the resident Arabs to leave their homes so as not to be in the way of the invaders. As soon as the "quick victory" was won, they could return to their homes and would also enjoy the loot from the Jews, who would have been driven into the sea. It didn't turn out quite that way. Those Arabs who, despite the urgings of the Jews to stay and to remain calm, foolishly left, became refugees. Those who decided not to yield to those blandishments are now, and have been for over 50 years, citizens of Israel, with all the same rights and privileges as their Jewish fellows.

But what happened to those refugees—by best estimates about 600,000 of them? Did their "Arab brethren" allow them to settle in their countries, to work, and to become productive citizens and useful members of their societies? No! They kept and still keep them, their children, their grandchildren, and in some cases even their great-grandchildren, in miserable "refugee camps", so that they can be used as political and military pawns in order to keep the burning hatred against Israel alive and in order to supply the manpower for the unremitting fight against Israel.

During those more than fifty years, Israel has taken in more than three million Jewish immigrants from all parts of the world and has integrated them productively into its society. According to the "Palestinians", the Arab "refugees" have now marvelously increased to five million (!). It is the intent and fervent desire of the Arabs that all of them should return to Israel so as to destroy the country without the necessity of war.

The "refugees" are a red herring and another myth created by the Arab propaganda machine.

The Arab propaganda machine, aided by the most high-powered public relations firms in the United States and all over, has created myths that, by dint of constant repetition, have been accepted as truth by much of the world. No sensible discussion, no peace in the Middle East, is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are.

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Democrats pressed the administration hard to go along with the idea. When the DNI was created, the new director, John Negroponte, chose Powell to be his general counsel. It's an indisputably important job, dealing with the myriad of complex legal questions that are involved with the War on Terror.

That's when Levin stepped in. Although he has never publicly stated his precise reason for blocking Powell, Republicans believe he is holding the nominee hostage in an attempt to force the administration to produce what is widely known as the Bybee Memo, a document outlining interrogation techniques for suspected terrorist prisoners. When asked in an e-mail inquiry by NATIONAL REVIEW, a Levin spokeswoman wrote that the senator "has said that the hold is related to the administration's refusal, without justification, to let the Senate review key documents regarding detainee treatment policies. The general counsel for the DNI will play a central role in advising the DNI and the intelligence community on these issues, and Sen. Levin believes that the Senate must have the opportunity to review these critical documents before considering a nominee for that position."

Levin's action has caused enormous frustration inside the DNI. On November 8, apparently running out of patience, Negroponte appealed directly to Senate majority leader Bill Frist and minority leader Harry Reid for help in breaking the impasse. Levin's hold is "hampering my ability to carry out my critical responsibilities," Negroponte wrote in a letter obtained by NATIONAL REVIEW. "I . . . have spoken multiple times with the relevant senator [Levin] about the objection to proceeding forward to confirm someone to this position. We understand there is a long-running dispute, but it is unrelated to the nominee. In the meantime, the DNI is without a General Counsel during the office's crucial formative months. . . . This delay is more than an unfortunate impasse. This is a delay that directly undermines my ability to carry out the mandate of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act."

So far, nothing has happened.

To Republicans who work in the field, the Powell situation is classic Levin. "He's very good at picking mid-level appointees and holding them up," says one Hill Republican. "It's just enough to p*** people off, but not enough to attract a lot of attention." Right now, at least, it's working. A significant number of people, on the Hill, in the intelligence community, in the Pentagon, and at the White House, are indeed angry at Levin for holding up Powell. Yet a search of the Nexis database reveals that Levin's hold has been reported just three times—twice in NATIONAL REVIEW once by UPI. Nothing in the *Washington Post*. Nothing in the *New York Times*. Nothing on television. Without widespread press coverage, there is little public pressure on Levin to change his position.

To Republicans who work in the intelligence field, the Powell situation is classic Levin.

The other way Levin has thrown a wrench into the anti-terrorism effort is by maintaining a lengthy feud with the Defense Department over documents. For more than two years now, Levin has been acutely interested in the workings of the Office of Special Plans, the unit inside the Pentagon run by undersecretary of defense for policy Douglas Feith, until Feith left government service last summer. Levin has often suggested that Feith's office distorted, exaggerated, invented, or in some other way manipulated intelligence about the connections between Iraq and al-Qaeda and about Saddam Hussein's weapons capabilities before the war.

In 2004, as he demanded that the Defense Department provide him documents about Feith's operation, Levin was quite open about his ultimate purpose: to influence the presidential campaign. "If people believe that the administration or the president exaggerated or embellished intelligence," he told *Roll Call*, the Capitol Hill newspaper, shortly before the Senate Intelligence Committee's report on pre-war intelligence was released, "I think that there will be some people [who] would say that is a factor in their vote."

The problem was, the committee did not find the Feith connection that Levin was seeking; in fact, its conclusions tended to discredit Levin's theories. So Levin changed course, deciding to write a report of his own. He released it on October 21, 2004, twelve days before the election. Compiled by his staff on the Armed Services Committee, and based on what Levin called an "alternative analysis" of the evidence, the report argued that "intelligence relating to the Iraq–al-Qaeda relationship was exaggerated by high ranking officials in the Department of Defense to support the Administration's decision to invade Iraq . . ." The high-ranking official most responsible for the exaggeration, Levin said, was Feith.

The report was not the result of any new evidence but was instead based on Levin's reading of the Intelligence Committee report, the September 11 commission report, books by Bob Woodward, Richard Clarke, and Ron Suskind, and an article in the *New York Times*. "It was ridiculous," says one Hill Republican. "Any time you see any government entity refer repeatedly to media articles, it's because they could find no factual evidence."

But Levin nevertheless made some very serious charges. The day the report was released, Levin told the *New York Times* that it showed Feith had engaged in a "continuing deception of Congress" about the Iraq/al-Qaeda issue. But then, in the very next sentence, Levin "said he had no evidence that Mr. Feith's conduct had been illegal," according to the *Times*. Republicans were baffled. Deceiving Congress is a crime. Was Levin accusing Feith or criminal activity or not?

It was never entirely clear. And the report had little, if any, influence on the campaign. But Levin hasn't stopped. In recent months, he has been pressing for the Intelligence Committee—in the "phase two" part of its investigation—to probe Feith's office. Committee chairman Pat Roberts has resisted, arguing that the issue has already been examined and re-examined. But Levin has persisted. As a compromise, in early September Roberts decided that, rather than have the committee do another investigation, he would refer Levin's questions to the Department of Defense's inspector general for a review.

Reading Roberts's September 9 letter to the Pentagon, in which he requested the review, it does not take much parsing to see that the chairman has reached the end

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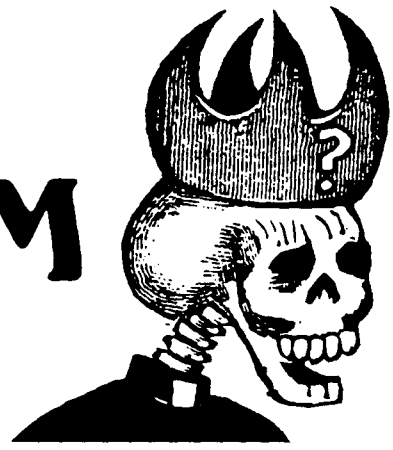
LIBERAL CATHOLICISM IS SUICIDAL



The liberal, anti-doctrinal spirit is poisoning the Catholic Church in America. Liberal Catholics don't like to talk about sin and its consequences. But then why did Christ bother to get crucified? And what are we saved from? Liberal priests are silent about Hell — but if there's no Hell, why be good? Why go to Mass? Not surprisingly, Mass attendance has dropped dramatically.

Liberals are forever bellyaching about the "sexist, homophobic, oppressive" Church. Not surprisingly, they're unable to attract converts.

Liberal clerics excuse their congregations from the Church's high sexual standards. No wonder certain of them excuse themselves too, hence so many sex scandals among the clergy.

Liberal priest don't explain Catholic teaching to their flocks. No wonder Catholics are being won over by fundamentalists, cults, and New Agers, who *do* know what they believe and why.

Pick-and-choose Catholicism denies the binding character of Scripture, Tradition, and Magisterium: One need only "follow one's conscience," which amounts to doing only what's convenient. Why belong to a Church which preaches *that*? People instinctively do what's convenient, without any coaxing from the clergy. Liberal Catholics are just imitators of liberal *Protestants*. By making Christianity comfortably ambiguous, have liberal Protestant Churches been flooded with converts? No. They're actually dying! Why? Because they offer *no authoritative answers* to life's big questions: Why am I here? What is true religion and virtue? How do I get to Heaven? By essentially turning themselves into debate clubs and therapy centers, they've failed to offer anything unique and unsurpassable. They elicit no commitment and little interest.

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of his rope with Levin. "The committee is concerned about persistent and, to date, unsubstantiated allegations that there was something unlawful or improper about the activities of the Office of Special Plans within the office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy during the period prior to the initiation of Operation Iraqi Freedom," Roberts wrote, adding:

> The Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence have both examined this issue. Both staffs have reviewed thousands of documents and conducted numerous interviews. Under Secretary Feith has appeared before both committees to testify on the issue. I have not discovered any credible evidence of unlawful or improper activity, yet the allegations persist.

Roberts might more accurately have said that Levin has persisted.

And he still does. A few days after the Roberts letter, on September 22, Levin wrote a letter of his own to the Pentagon. He included a copy of his October 2004 report—to assist in the review—and asked ten detailed questions, all about Feith or his office. And at the end, whereas Roberts had asked the inspector general to determine whether any of the Feith office's actions were "unlawful or improper," Levin asked that the review determine whether Feith's actions were *inappropriate* or improper. Having failed to find what he was seeking, Levin changed the standards of the search—although it's unlikely that Roberts will go along with the type of fishing-expedition inquiry that a search for "inapproriate" conduct would involve.

Why does he do it? It's always possible that Levin actually believes strongly in what he is doing and feels that the evidence is there, if he can just dig deep enough. It's also possible that he has gotten caught up in the chase, in what the *Wall Street Journal* has called his "Ahab-like" pursuit of Feith. And, of course, there's always another election coming around.

And who knows? What didn't work in 2004 might do better in 2006. "When you aren't winning at the polls, you go after the people and do your best to cast shadows over them," says the Hill Republican. "And if you can do that, then maybe you can win at the polls." **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY**

Back in the CNMI

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is no model when it comes to immigration

MARK KRIKORIAN

Never under any condition should this nation look at an immigrant as primarily a labor unit. He should always be looked at primarily as a future citizen.
—Theodore Roosevelt, 1917

Over the next several months, Congress will debate whether our country needs to import more foreign labor. President Bush has made his position clear: "If an American employer is offering a job that American citizens are not willing to take, we ought to welcome into our country a person who will fill that job."

What would be the effect of such a policy? Some have looked for answers in our history, specifically the Bracero Program, which imported Mexican workers for about 20 years and ended in the 1960s. Others have looked to the experience of foreign countries, such as Kuwait.

But there's a corner of the United States where we can see right now the consequences of the president's willing-worker/willing-employer immigration approach: the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or CNMI. Over the past two decades, this tiny colonial possession has imported large numbers of contract workers for "jobs Americans won't do." The results should give us pause.

First, some background. These islands are just north of Guam and were seized from the Japanese in the bloody World War II battles of Saipan (the CNMI's main island) and Tinian. When the islands came under full American sovereignty, the CNMI negotiated a special deal: The natives became U.S. citizens but would be able to set their own tax, labor, and immigration policies.

The reason behind the exemption from U.S. immigration law was the fear that the indigenous population might come to be outnumbered by newcomers, as in Hawaii. Years later, the bipartisan U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform reported that residents had been "concerned" about changes "irretrievably altering the native culture and community."

But rather than using the control over immigration to preserve their "culture and community," the island elite and outside businessmen combined it with other loopholes (tariff-free exports to the U.S. and the right to claim "Made in the USA" for locally assembled garments) to upend the intent of the immigration exemption by importing a large foreign workforce. Foreign workers, mostly Filipino and Chinese, now account for the majority of the population of 80,000.

Of course, the consequences of a large-scale foreign-worker program in the U.S. (pop. 300 million) would not be as concentrated or as revolutionary as in the tiny CNMI; and yet the lesson is clear. Rep. Tom DeLay, a strong defender of the Commonwealth's special arrangement against bipartisan efforts to end it, has connected the dots between the CNMI's guestworker program and our own immigration policies. In 1998, the *Houston Chronicle* reported, "Rather than impose more regulation on the U.S. territory, DeLay said, the United States ought to adopt the islands' business and labor practices by creating a guestworker program of its own 'where particular companies can bring Mexican workers in' to fill jobs that Americans won't take. DeLay said the workers could be paid at 'whatever wage the market will bear.'"

DeLay wasn't the only one who saw the Marianas' guestworker program as an important experiment. Jack Abramoff, the CNMI's lobbyist at the time, brought many opinion leaders from Washington for canned tours in the 1990s, and they spoke upon their return of the CNMI as "America's Hong Kong," a "free-market success," a "laboratory of liberty," "a perfect petri dish of capitalism."

Mr. Krikorian is executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies.

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So, what grew in this petri dish? The same thing that grows in any society that succumbs to the temptation of "temporary" foreign workers: exploitation of the foreigners, distortion of the host society, and permanent settlement of the temporary workers.

Exploitation. Guestworkers are, by design, not treated by the same standards as the native population. The inevitable result of the guestworker's servile relationship to his employer is abuse; this was true for Mexican farm workers in the Southwest, and Filipinos in the Persian Gulf. The guestworkers in Saipan, especially in the garment factories, had the same experience. Through the 1990s, the U.S. Labor Department levied large fines on garment firms as restitution for thousands of workers who were not paid overtime, not paid at all, or locked in factories and barracks ringed with barbed wire. It got so bad that in 1995 the Philippines temporarily stopped issuing work visas for the CNMI to its citizens.

The young Chinese women who fill the garment factories (some owned by the Chinese Communist government) had it especially bad. Many had paid thousands of dollars to recruiters, resulting in de facto indentured servitude. Abuses in the garment factories attracted substantial American media attention, including ABC's *20/20* program, which resulted in some improvements, including a cap on the number of imported garment workers. Also, a garment oversight board was established last year as the result of a class-action suit filed in 1999 against manufacturers and the American retailers who purchased their garments (the Gap and others).

The combination of better oversight and this year's sunsetting of most restrictions on U.S. garment imports from China means that factories are beginning to close and return to Red China. In other words, the opportunity to import Third World workers to the U.S., but to keep treating them according to Third World norms, was a large part of the attraction of the guestworker program in the first place. But even as the garment sector shrinks, abuses continue, and even proliferate, in less-visible occupations staffed by foreign labor, such as bar girls, prostitutes, house servants, and farm workers.

Distortion. But moves to limit abuse are irrelevant to the more fundamental impact of a foreign-labor program: the abnormal development of the host society. The foreign-labor program has completely transformed the CNMI's society in a single generation. About 70 percent of the population is now foreign-born, almost all of it non-citizen. Chamorros, the main indigenous ethnic group, used to be a clear majority; they are now barely a quarter of the population.

The guestworker system has also reinforced in the locals a culture of pervasive dependence on government. Fully 70 percent of the labor force is non-citizens, and at least 85 percent of all private-sector jobs are held by Asians. U.S. citizens have an unemployment rate triple that of non-citizens; of the indigenous Chamorros who do have jobs, 56 percent work for the government, fueling a doubling in the size of the bureaucracy since 1980.

The 2000 census found a poverty rate on the islands of 46 percent, up significantly from just two years earlier, and nearly quadruple the U.S. rate. A recent survey found that two-thirds of children in the Commonwealth received food assistance from the local or federal government. The number of people receiving federal Food Stamps specifically has increased more than sevenfold in less than a decade.

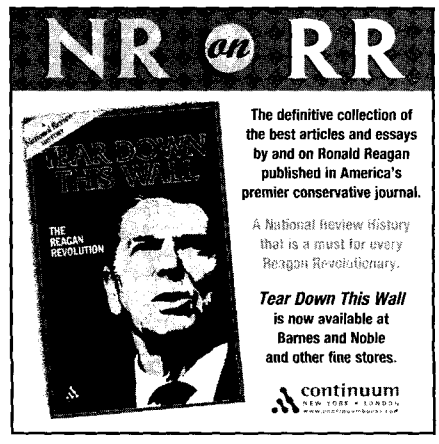
The corrosive effect on the work ethic and morals of the American citizens is so bad that, in 1995, the government actually had to issue a directive prohibiting welfare recipients from hiring foreign maids. "Free-market success," indeed.

To address such social distortions, countries often launch efforts to mandate local hiring. "Saudization" is what it's called in that kingdom, but it has enjoyed little success there. A policy of what might be called "Marianization" has done little better: There is a requirement that 20 percent of a firm's workforce be local, but the requirement is not enforced.

Permanent settlement. The inevitable process of permanent settlement of these "temporary" workers is also well underway. An amnesty that ended in 1999 registered more than 3,000 illegal aliens, and there are now as many as 7,000, with new proposals for further amnesties. In addition, foreign workers without jobs may remain legally while they have a labor complaint pending. What's more, all babies born in the CNMI are automatically U.S. citizens, and close to half are born to "temporary" foreign workers, making it that much less likely they will ever leave.

In fact, there has sprung up something called the "Dekada Movement" among foreign workers to lobby for permanent status. They claim, correctly, that "the CNMI is the only place under the U.S. flag where a majority of the adult population lacks political rights." The name is from the Filipino word for decade, and the group originally sought residency for "temporary" workers who had lived in the CNMI for ten years (since reduced to five years). The movement has more than 3,000 registered members. U.S. officials have sent a clear message that these people aren't going to get American green cards, but as their numbers, and their citizen-children's numbers, grow, it seems a good bet they will eventually get at least permanent residency in the CNMI, converting them to permanent immigrants rather than temporary workers.

The CNMI's experience over the past 20 years is a clear warning against any of the foreign-worker proposals before Congress. A new guestworker program in the U.S. would have the same basic results: widespread permanent settlement, increased illegal immigration, exploitation of foreign workers, and distortion of our economy and society. "Only a few countries, and no democratic society, have immigration policies similar to the CNMI," wrote the bipartisan Commission on Immigration Reform. "The closest equivalent is Kuwait." This is not a club we should want to join. **NR**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■ CAPITOL HILL

Rep. Budget Reform

Jeb Hensarling (R., Tex.) is doing vital work

JOHN J. MILLER

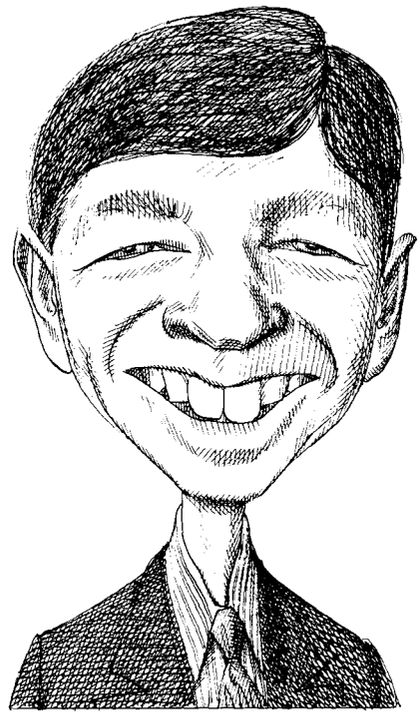
If former senator Phil Gramm could have been in two places at once last June, he might have found a way to testify before a House committee on financial-services legislation. But he was traveling on business in Europe, and so he asked Jeb Hensarling, a former aide who is now a congressman, to deliver prepared remarks in his absence. "I tried to speak in an accent that the entire committee could understand," jokes Hensarling, whose own drawl is only slightly less thick than Gramm's.

Among conservatives, few senators have ever been as popular as Gramm—a hard-driving budget hawk who delivered principled leadership until he retired from public life. In 2002, the same year Gramm chose not to run for reelection, Hensarling was sent to Congress for the first time, from a district that starts in Dallas and sprawls eastward. Since then, he has taken on many of the issues that once motivated his mentor, most notably the crucial but often thankless job of promoting process reforms to rein in federal spending.

The 48-year-old Hensarling is short, wiry, and energetic. He was barely out of high school when he came under Gramm's influence: He enrolled in Texas A&M and signed up for a banking class taught by a professor who was beginning to think about politics. "Everybody knew that if you were a serious economics student, you had to get with Gramm," he says. Several years later, after Gramm had won a seat in the House, Hensarling got with him again, by securing an internship with former professor. It was the beginning of a long professional association in which Hensarling coordinated Gramm's constituent services and served as executive director of the National Republican Senatorial Committee when Gramm was its chairman. The experience positioned Hensarling not only to make his own bid for Congress, but possibly to inherit Gramm's reputation as one of the smartest strategists in Washington's frustrating budget battles.

"Spending is out of control," says Hensarling. "Everybody understands that." Indeed, the facts are grim, especially for conservatives who once thought that a Republican in the White House and GOP majorities in Congress would inaugurate an era of fiscal discipline. Since George W. Bush arrived in Washington, federal spending has grown by 33 percent, which is twice as fast as it grew under President Clinton. Defense and homeland security account for only 35 percent of the expansion, according to the Heritage Foundation. The bulk of the spending increase has gone to entitlement programs, farm subsidies, the Department of Education, and so on. "We're spending more money per household than we have at any time since the Second World War," says Heritage analyst Brian M. Riedl. "Unless something happens, we're headed toward a real crisis."

Short of a sea change in Washington's political culture—don't hold your breath—there are no quick solutions to the entrenched problem of runaway spending. "There will never be a substitute for courage and principle among members of Congress," says Hensarling. "And a lot of guys up here, especially from the class of 1994, are fatigued from having charged the machine-gun nests for so long." Perhaps worn-out lawmakers simply ought to retire. But no matter what they do, there are a handful of measures that might make it easier for conservatives to show courage and display principle in future fights. Collectively, these measures go by the sleep-inducing name of "budget process reform," but please stay awake: They may be essential first steps in any effort to turn off the spigot of federal spending.



Congressman from Texas

ROMAN GENN

"What we have around here is a machine that's been built to spend money," says Hensarling. "The rules are stacked in favor of people who want to spend money." Because much of the budget is calculated from formulas that result in automatic spending increases, the size of government may be expected to grow by 6 to 8 percent every year for the foreseeable future—*automatically*. As baby-boomers age and begin to qualify for senior-citizen entitlements, the challenge of keeping costs in check will only worsen, especially if Congress continues doing business more or less the way it has since it passed the Budget Act of 1974.

Take baseline budgeting. This involves estimating how much federal spending is projected to increase because of mandatory programs. The entire calculation rests on the assumption that a growing government is just the natural order of things. And so if a few politicians propose reducing the rate of growth on spending that has not yet actually occurred—recommending, for instance, that entitlements increase by 6.2 percent rather than 6.3 percent—they get slammed by liberals as Scrooge-like misanthropes.

That's exactly what happened to Rep. Thad McCotter, a Michigan Republican who dared to defend a modest proposal to slice $50 billion out of future budgets. The *Detroit News* greeted McCotter on the morning of December 5 with this top-of-the-front-page headline: "Federal cutbacks threaten poor." The story went on

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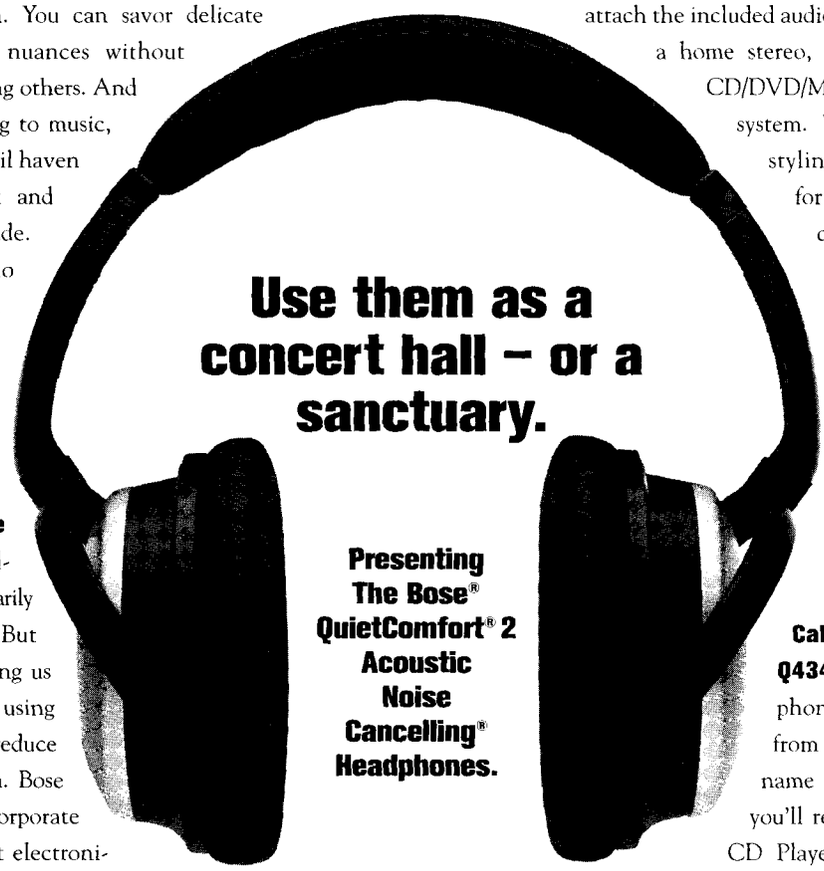

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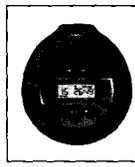

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to quote a person who suggested that she would "be starving" if these projected expenses—all of them products of baseline budgeting—were pulled back by the rapacious level of one-tenth of 1 percent.

The legislation that Hensarling has proposed—called the Family Budget Protection Act (FBPA), and co-sponsored by Republicans Chris Chocola (Indiana) and Paul Ryan (Wisconsin)—would virtually eliminate baseline budgeting. It would also impose spending caps and force Congress to deal with its own budget the way that most families deal with theirs: decide how much money they can afford to spend, and then prioritize within those limits.

Another key provision would address the specter of a government shutdown that looms every time Congress fails to meet budget deadlines (which is a regular occurrence). This is the problem that confounded Newt Gingrich when he squared off against President Clinton over federal spending a decade ago. Republicans never figured out how to prevail in these D.C. donnybrooks. The FBPA would offer a helpful reprieve by requiring the government to keep spending at current levels, as if Congress were passing a series of continuing resolutions.

The bill includes other features that would help shift the home-field advantage away from the spenders and toward advocates of limited government. Every federal program, for instance, would come with an expiration date, forcing Congress to reappraise its value at recurring intervals. "This would force liberals—finally—to play a little defense," says Hensarling. "They would spend their time not creating new programs but defending the ones they've already got." What's more, the bill would grant the president enhanced rescission authority, which would function as a kind of line-item veto that would (presumably) pass constitutional muster.

The chief problem with any proposal to reform the budget process is that it excites almost nobody: "Enhanced rescission authority" doesn't exactly trip off the tongue, and it's much harder to explain than a tax cut or a bridge to nowhere. In some ways, the FBPA is a proposal that only a Beltway budget wonk could love—except that most Beltway budget wonks don't love it because they by and large approve of the way Congress spends cash right now. Last year, when Congress voted on portions of Hensarling's bill offered as amendments, they didn't come close to passage.

That's why some conservatives worry that this small-bore approach will never lead to meaningful change. The Heritage Foundation has endorsed an alternative that shares the goal of fundamentally altering the budget-process mindset: a federal law modeled on Colorado's Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR), which restricts the growth of government to the combined rate of inflation and population increase. The irony is that although incremental steps have trouble gaining popular support—Hensarling's legislation is a prime example—more radical ones are easier to understand. Therefore, at least in theory, they are easier to pass. But making something easier to pass should not be confused with making it easy to pass: A federal TABOR would be enormously controversial, and the public might even oppose it. In November, for example, Colorado voters approved a partial repeal of their state's spending restrictions. That election result certainly didn't provide any momentum to the federal effort. The fate of a TABOR-like initiative scheduled for the ballot next year in Ohio will be watched closely—especially by Republican presidential candidates in search of big ideas.

In the meantime, Hensarling is satisfied by a promise from party leaders that the House will take up some version of his budget reforms next year. "With our legislation, we've written what we consider to be the gold standard," says the congressman, convinced that even a watered-down version is better than nothing. "Maybe we'll wind up with the rusty-tin standard. We'll have to wait and see."

A gold standard, whether Heritage's or Hensarling's, is certainly worthy of aspiration—even if nobody ever reaches it. The same might be said of the Gramm standard. By one reckoning, however, Hensarling is well on his way to meeting that goal. "I hope people will remember Jeb long after they've forgotten me," says the retired senator. "He has too much ability just to be my protégé." **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH**

The Idea Of the (Feminized) University

Coeds are one thing . . .

GEORGE GILDER

WHY would any self-respecting boy want to attend one of America's increasingly feminized universities? Most of these institutions have flounced through the last forty years fashioning a fluffy pink playpen of feminist studies and agitprop "herstory," taught amid a green goo of eco-motherism and anti-industrial phobia. They routinely showcase such trendy trumperies as *The Vagina Monologues,* while sacrificing thousands of men's athletic teams at the altar of Title IX. They happily open their arms to the recruiting efforts of gay and lesbian student centers, while banning the Reserve Officers' Training Corps and other military groups from campus. And, as they launch bidding wars for the few women who qualify for tenured appointments in math and science, they stint on male-oriented pursuits such as engineering and mechanics.

Perhaps this explains why American men have taken a demographic plunge in higher education. Men now constitute less than 43 percent of the U.S. college-student population, and receive only 41 percent of new bachelors' degrees. Similar figures appear throughout the Western world, implying that the emergence of an unschooled male underclass is not only an American problem. In a world where male talent in mathematics and engineering confers significant national advan-

Mr. Gilder is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute.

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tages in wealth and power, these numbers are portentous indeed.

Disturbing as it is, this pattern is no mystery. Inferior male performance in school is chiefly associated with fatherless families. Among major industrial countries, only Sweden, Norway, and Denmark significantly surpass the U.S. in the female dominance of higher education; these Scandinavian countries also lead in female-headed families. In all of Europe, only Switzerland shows a drastically lower level of fatherlessness, with an 11 percent illegitimacy rate in 2001 as compared with 32 percent in the U.S. and 42 percent in Sweden. And, sure enough, Switzerland displays continued male dominance of higher education, with men constituting around 60 percent of the college-student population.

The ill effects of fatherless families should come as no surprise. Around the globe and throughout human history, mothers left alone have foundered on the challenge of raising and disciplining boys. As I stated in my 1986 book, *Men & Marriage*, family dissolution in the modern world leads to "a welfare state to take care of the women and children and a police state to handle the teenaged boys." I might add today that it also entails immigration or outsourcing to do much of society's work and to support the childless in their old age.

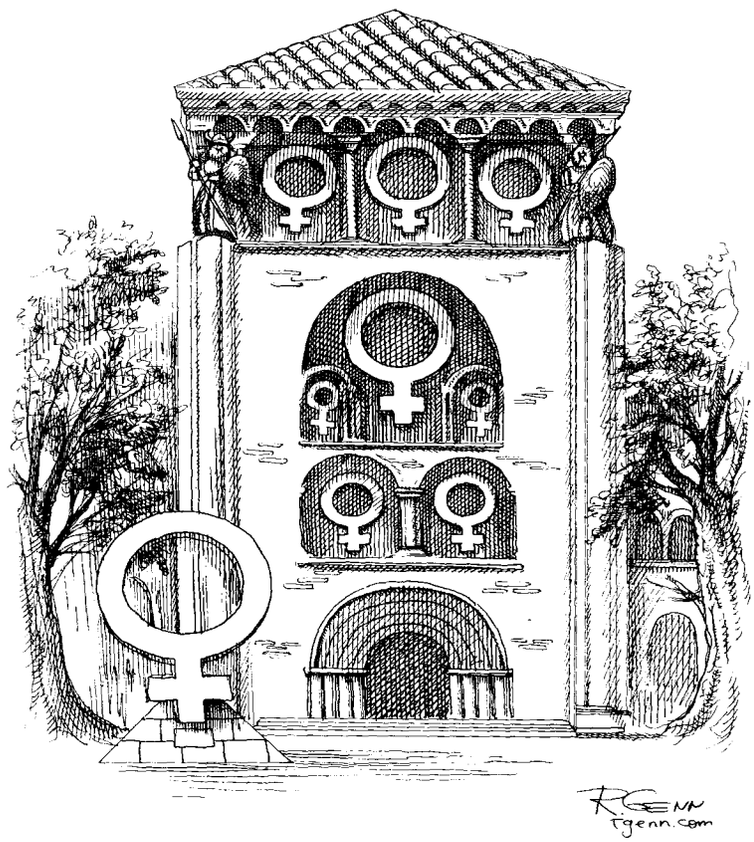
On the police-state side, the decline of men in higher education relates to the 93 percent–male composition of America's world-leading prison population. As Bill Bennett has pungently observed, America's prisons are dominated by blacks from the fatherless families that make up close to 80 percent of inner-city households. The Department of Justice estimates that fully 32 percent of all black males will enter state or federal prison during their lifetimes, as compared with less than 6 percent of white males. More than a third of American black men between the ages of 17 and 35 are currently in jail, on probation, or on the lam. In Scandinavian countries, the police are similarly busy with truants. Prison populations there remain radically smaller, but, unlike in the U.S., crime rates are still soaring. Sweden leads Europe with a six-to-tenfold rise in various property crimes and sexual assaults since the 1970s.

Family breakdown drives the ever-expanding police state to extend its webs and ensnare men far beyond the prison population. Beadles from divorce courts, welfare agencies, child-support administrations, and child-abuse constabularies use massive computer surveillance to track the jobs and movements of so-called deadbeat or DNA dads. They treat unmarried or divorced fathers, in Bryce Christensen's words, as "quasi-criminals, perpetually under corrective supervision."

As Margaret Mead famously declared, the key social issue in every society is how to deal with the aggressiveness and competitiveness of males. The traditional solution is marriage, which ties men to the future through their children and channels their aggression into supporting their families through competitive success in both education and the workplace. In families that are intact, boys tend to socialize upward toward their fathers and other adult men, such as teachers and coaches, rather than sideways toward the gang and the street. They also tend to readily accept the educational disciplines required by upward mobility. Even today in intact middle- and upper-class families, where fathers usually perform as chief providers, more boys than girls go to college.

The sexual skew in American universities reflects a condition widely reported in anthropological studies: The nuclear family always must compete with polygyny (derived from the Greek for "many women"). Enabling the most powerful men (by whatever relevant measure) to dominate the nubile or childbearing years of several young women, polygyny can be pursued through harems and mistresses or extended over time through a series of divorces and remarriages. Monogamy is egalitarianism in sex; it means one to a customer. When this institution breaks down, it leaves behind an underclass of young men who cannot marry and who are prone to addiction to homosexuality and pornography. It also creates cohorts of abandoned women who are left to struggle with their sons and then grow old alone.

As Swedish economist Assar Lindbeck pointed out in the 1980s, the pattern of family breakdown is fed by the excesses of the welfare state. "Progressive" systems skewed to tax the so-called rich (the top 20 percent of earners) necessarily bear most heavily on intact families with children who do the lion's share of society's productive work. Recent data show that the top fifth of households perform some 33 percent of the hours worked, earn roughly



ROMAN GENN

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50 percent of the income, and pay 68 percent of federal income and payroll taxes, all while raising most of the boys who pursue higher education. The progressive taxes paid by these families finance programs and institutions such as child support, daycare, job quotas, affirmative action, divorce courts, foster homes, abortion clinics, nursing homes, and cradle-to-grave health care, all of which reduce the unique value of the personal-care functions provided by father-supported families. In this way, state-provided welfare provisions create an anti-family feedback loop in social policy, reducing incentives for families to stay together and creating what Allan Carlson has called a multi-trillion-dollar "lifestyle subsidy" for careerist singles and broken families.

Yet despite the state-assisted breakdown of the nuclear family and the resulting dearth of young men in higher education, males continue to dominate the educational statistics in advanced mathematics (and the math-intensive fields of science and engineering) all around the world. The news may prompt the tenured ladies at Harvard and MIT to burst into tears and summon lawyers to sue God, but the evidence for a biological source of male mathematical superiority is overwhelming. Boys are better at math, and the harder the math the greater the male superiority. Indeed, throughout human history, female mathematicians and engineers have made almost no significant contributions to these fields. The absence of boys in colleges does not mean that women suddenly begin writing most of our leading-edge software programs or designing microchips for our missile defenses. The feminization of the universities simply deprives the economy of the technical skills and competitive energies of new generations of men.

In response, the powerful polygynists in charge of many large global corporations range the world to tap male talent wherever it may be. They tend to find it in Asian universities, such as India's fiercely meritocratic IIT campuses, where males constitute at least 90 percent of the students. The visible results of this are high-tech outsourcing and immigration. But the roots are nurtured by the breakdown of families, the feminization of American universities, and the flight of boys from them. **NR**

■ **ABROAD**

Liberté, Egalité, Colonialisme

A new French law stokes interesting fires

ANTHONY DANIELS

THERE is nothing quite like a stupid and unnecessary law to raise the ideological temperature. On February 23 of this year, the French National Assembly passed such a law, requiring school teachers of history to emphasize the positive role of French colonialism overseas, particularly in North Africa. There were immediate anti-French demonstrations in Algeria and the Antilles. The French minister of the interior, Nicolas Sarkozy, felt obliged to cancel an official visit to the French West Indies, legally part of France rather than a colonial possession, at the beginning of this month because of the ideological furor that the law caused and continues to cause.

President Chirac has tried to calm tempers, both inside the country and out, by stating that it is not for the law to write history but for historians to do so. Unfortunately, he has not consistently been of this opinion: For example, much to the annoyance of Turkey, he signed a law in 2001 stating that France publicly recognized the genocide of the Armenians in 1915. It is difficult to believe that this was merely a disinterested and belated recognition of the truth, and had nothing whatever to do with Turkey's application to join the European Union, which France opposes.

History is usually contentious, of course: We always tend to view the past through the spectacles of our present discontents and our political, social, and philosophical preoccupations. Long gone are the days, at least in Europe, when history could be taught from the purely patriotic standpoint, as the continuous progress of the country from dizzy triumph to dizzy triumph, whose very defeats were glorious because even they contributed to the eventual victory of the present.

Count Benckendorff, the head of the czarist secret police under Nicholas I, said that the point of view from which Russia must be written about was that Russia's past was glorious, her present magnificent, and her future beyond the wildest imagining. (The last was certainly true.) Even a partial restoration of this program, such as that represented by the French National Assembly's law, now not only looks ridiculous but is bound to arouse rancor in all those who have something to complain of. And not even the most patriotic Frenchman would deny that there are many such aggrieved people around the world.

What, then, is to be taught? Children must learn something of the past, after all; without any knowledge of the history of their country, they can have little understanding of its present and no concept of belonging to anything larger, greater, or more important than the group of acquaintances into which chance has happened to throw them. Furthermore, they need a basis for the collective pride that is one of the spurs to achievement and can act as a motive for good behavior—though it can also, of course, act as a motive for very bad behavior.

The problem is to find a way to avoid the Scylla of simplistic triumphalist history on one hand and the Charybdis of equally simplistic black legend on the other. It is not easy: The proponents of one feed off the dishonesties of the other.

Unfortunately, recent French history provides plenty of material for the construction of a simplistic black legend: No one who reads Gide's account of French Equatorial Africa in the 1920s, for example, could doubt the horrors of French colonialism at that time, when railways were built at the cost of a death per tie laid. Furthermore, France's extremely dubious record during the Second World War—and its resistance to the decolonization of Indochina, Madagascar, and Algeria, which led to the deaths of hun-

Mr. Daniels is a doctor and writer in England. Among his books is *Utopias Elsewhere*.

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Suffering from Chronic Pain? For Solutions, Read On...

Up to 30 million Americans suffer from under-treated chronic pain.[1] Families suffer with them. For most, suffering is completely unnecessary.

Problem: Medical schools do not provide sufficient curriculum time to pain management nor do most residency programs.
Solution: Encourage medical schools to prioritize teaching pain management per "best practice" as recommended by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)[2] and also provide educational workshops for physicians already in practice.

Problem: Even when properly informed, doctors are often afraid to follow "best practice" guidelines for patients who require large amounts of medication or even to accept pain patients out of fear of being targeted by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).
Solution: Seek another doctor if your prescription fails to relieve your pain. If you are unable to obtain adequate medication, complain to your senators and congressman and urge them to investigate the DEA's failure to respect "best practice" and persecution of conscientious physicians. (Conscientious physicians tend to attract extreme chronic pain sufferers, and hence prescribe greater quantities of opioids in general and huge doses to some patients as warranted. Thus they attract the scrutiny of overzealous DEA agents and prosecutors who either don't understand "best practice" or are seeking headlines to divert attention from their overall failure to prevent wide scale criminal diversion of licit and illicit drugs.)

Problem: Many patients suffer needlessly because they are either too stoic to complain or they mistakenly fear addiction.
Solution: Educate patients about the importance of reporting unrelieved pain, and make them aware that opioid treatment is rarely addictive.

Problem: Loved ones often underestimate the debilitating effects of chronic pain and discourage taking dosages as prescribed.
Solution: Involve family members in pain treatment consultations. Make them aware that their loved one's pain affects the entire family and can be successfully treated medically.

You are entitled to "Best Practice" treatment. Demand it!

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1) "Pain Facts: An Overview of American Pain Surveys," American Pain Foundation, from the web at http://www.painfoundation.org/print.asp?file=Library/PainSurveys.htm, last accessed Nov. 22, 2005.
2) Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations on Pain Management, from the web at http://www.jcaho.org/news+room/health+care+issues/jcaho+focuses+on+pain+management.htm, Nov. 22, 2005.

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dreds of thousands of people—would lend further evidence to the prosecution's case. In 1961, an unknown but large number of supporters of the FLN were killed in Paris and dumped into the Seine; and even the Harkis—the Algerians who fought in the Algerian war on the French side, some of whom were allowed to migrate to France after the end of the war (scores of thousands who remained behind in Algeria were killed)—were treated with abominable ingratitude, left to rot in degrading settlement camps until well into the 1970s.

But the very existence of the Harkis, in large numbers, should give pause to any simplistic vision of the French past, and make us hesitate to accept wholeheartedly the anti-colonial nationalist vision. No doubt many Harkis joined the French side in the Algerian war because of pressure brought to bear on them, or out of personal calculation rather than political conviction; but the same is true on the nationalist side. Many Harkis, on the other hand, were sincerely loyal to the French, which made the ingratitude they later experienced all the more painful. Their love was unrequited; indeed, it was now found embarrassing. But it was love.

Another irony is that nationalist historiography throughout the formerly colonized world, rigidly enforced in their respective countries, is at least as distorted as that proposed by the French National Assembly. The crimes of colonialism are well-known; but the crimes of nationalist decolonization are very great too. Needless to say, they find no place in what is taught to children today in formerly colonized countries, for the crimes have continued down to the present day, and the beneficiaries of these crimes, still in power, do not want to be called to account.

As judged by their subsequent behavior, very few anti-colonial agitators were fighting for freedom, India being the great exception (and, not coincidentally, the one with the subtlest historiography); they were mostly fighting for power, which is a very different thing indeed, and they often used methods to achieve it that were morally indistinguishable from those of the colonizer. Once in power, the FLN, for example, increased neither intellectual nor economic freedom in Algeria, and its subsequent corrupt mismanagement of the country has led to a further outbreak of hideous violence. The gain to the population as a whole, once you subtract the improvement brought about by technical progress that would have happened in any case, is far from clear. And what would the Algerians say if the French school curriculum were entirely frank about the crimes and dishonesty of the nationalist side as well as of the French side?

Recently in Fort-de-France, in Guadaloupe, one of the French islands in the West Indies, there was a demonstration against the notion that colonialism had brought any benefits to the colonized. It was sparsely attended, because the rest of the population was too busy doing its Christmas shopping, largely with subventions supplied by—well, by France, of course.

The French Foreign Legion, 1928

BETTMANN/CORBIS

Standing by a truly pitiable picture of black slaves, protesters used microphones to make themselves heard: not a method available to their ancestors before the advent of colonialism. And, oddly enough, one of the issues most on the minds of the inhabitants of Guadaloupe is the accelerating influx of refugees from Haiti and even the Dominican Republic. People appear to be fleeing from freedom, or at least independence, to one of the last vestiges of colonialism.

True, Haiti was once a French colony, the site of possibly the very worst crimes of colonialism. But French colonialism in Haiti lasted 100 years, while independence has so far lasted 200 years. Again, it is true that Haiti was badly treated by the outside world for much of its first century of existence, but could it be said that its inhabitants and their political elite contributed nothing whatever, or nothing important, to its present (and past) sorry condition? To say so is to reduce Haitians to a status something less than that of full human beings. In truth, their colonial inheritance was terrible, but they did everything possible to make it worse.

In the wake of the controversy stirred by the National Assembly's vote, Nicolas Sarkozy, whose characterization of the youth of the rioting suburbs as "scum" caused his popularity in France to rocket, said that he was against what he called an "excess of repentance" for France's colonial past. He said that it was a manifestation of the dangerous tendency of French society to hate itself. Self-hatred is not a good augury for survival.

Was French colonialism good or bad? Certainly, France enjoyed the greatest prosperity in its history immediately after the loss of its colonies. Respectable historians have argued that colonialism cost France more in military and administrative expenses than it ever received in cheap goods or labor in return. As for the colonized, they were often badly, even abominably treated, but they received such benefits as technical progress and access to a much wider world and culture than they would otherwise have known.

I hesitate to quote Dominique de Villepin, but he was surely right when he said that the Republic, a democracy, "has no official history." France has known greatness, he said, and she has known problems. She has known times of enlightenment and times of darkness. It is an inheritance that she must accept in its entirety, respecting the memories of all.

This, of course, is the counsel of perfection. Which of us can achieve it even in his personal life? And yet it is something to which we ought to aspire, aware that it remains forever beyond our grasp. **NR**

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■ COVER STORY

The Defeaticrats

Of hearts and minds, at home and in Iraq

MARK STEYN

HANDS up, everyone who thinks Iraq's a quagmire.

Not the Iraqi people: According to the latest polls, 70 percent think "life is good," and 69 percent are optimistic that things will get even better in the year ahead. For purposes of comparison, they took a similar poll in Europe a while back: In France, 29 percent said they were optimistic about the future; in Germany, 15 percent. Sixty-three percent of Iraqis say they feel "very safe" in their own neighborhoods, which is more than the residents of Clichy-sous-Bois can say.

Well, okay, those cheerful Iraqis are probably Shiites and Kurds and whatnot. How about the Sunnis? For a small minority group that held a disproportionate and repressive grip on power for decades, they've been getting a more solicitous press from Western "liberals" than the white Rhodesians or South Africa's National party ever got. But it turns out, after their strategically disastrous decision to stay home in last January's vote, the Sunnis are participating in Iraq's democratic process in ever greater numbers.

Oh, okay, so the Shiites and Kurds and Sunnis are feeling chipper, but in the broader Middle East the disastrous neocon invasion has inflamed moderate Arab opinion against America. Well, it's true the explosive Arab street finally exploded the other day—with 200,000 Jordanians protesting in Amman, waving angry banners and yelling, "Burn in hell, Rumsfeld," and, "You are a coward, Bush." Whoops, my mistake: They were yelling, "Burn in hell, Zarqawi," and, "You are a coward, Zarqawi." If you want to hear someone yelling, "You are a coward, Bush," you've got to go to Cindy Sheehan's stakeout. And, in fairness to the network news divisions, it may be because so many of their camera crews have taken up permanent residence at the otherwise underpopulated Camp Cindy that they were unable to cover what was the largest demonstration against terrorism ever seen on the streets of the Middle East.

Mr. Steyn is NR's back-page columnist, and a writer for many other publications. His website is www.MarkSteyn.com.

Oh, well. So the Shiites and Kurds and Sunni Iraqis and the Arab street are all on board, but come on, what about the insurgents? Everybody knows they're winning . . . but, er, apparently *they* don't. The Baathist diehard insurgents have split from the foreign al-Qaeda insurgents. While the latter denounced the Iraqi election as "a Satanic project," the Saddamite remnants urged Sunnis to participate and said they'd protect polling stations from attacks by the foreign terrorists so that citizens could vote for their approved candidates (the leftover bits of Uday and Qusay, now running on the Psychotic Dictatorship Nostalgia Party ticket). This division between the foreign nutcakes and the domestic nutcakes is the biggest strategic split over the insurgency since Joe Lieberman respectfully distanced himself from Nancy Pelosi.

INSURGENCY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

On the other hand, this does belatedly prove the anti-war crowd's long-held view that Saddam's secular Baathists and Osama's theocrat terrorists would never collaborate, even if it took until last month for the participants themselves to get wise to it. And, alas, unlike the Dems with Hillary, in the Sunni Triangle there's no Sunni triangulator to craft a more nuanced position to hold both the Lieberbaathist and Pelosama wings together.

So the Shiites, Kurds, Sunnis, the Arab street, and the Baath party have figured Iraqi democracy's winning. That leaves al-Qaeda. Well, not exactly: Ayman Zawahiri, the number-two honcho in al-Qaeda while they're maintaining the polite fiction that bin Laden's still functioning, recently rapped terror leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi on the knuckles and called on him to cut out killings that "the masses do not understand or approve." (The twitchy Mr. Zawahiri was presumably thinking of, for example, the assassination of the septuagenarian grand imam of Fallujah for urging Sunnis to get out and vote.)

So the Shiites, Kurds, Sunnis, the Arab street, the Baath party, and bin Laden's deputy think the insurgency's a bust. Hands up, who thinks it's winning?

Well, there's Howard Dean: "The idea that we are going to win

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this war is an idea that unfortunately is just plain wrong." And look over there, it's Jack Murtha, and he's a veteran, and he thinks we need to scramble for the last chopper over the embassy compound right now! "There's a civil war going," he says. "Our troops are the targets of the civil war. They're the only people that could have unified the various factions in Iraq. And they're unified against us."

By "us," I think he means him and Zarqawi. And no, I'm not "questioning his patriotism"; I'm questioning his sanity. It was famously said that the Vietnam War was lost on television. In this instance, the Iraq War's being lost only on television. In Iraq, it's a tremendous victory. Indeed, it has the potential to be one of the most consequential, transformative victories of the modern age; but even if it doesn't ever fulfill that potential, it's still a huge success.

DAZED AND CONFUSED

I've never been one for "winning the hearts and minds" of Iraqis. Heart-wise, an awful lot of them dislike infidels and Jews and American soldiers, and, while one may deplore that, it's just a fact of life. But, in their minds, as those poll numbers indicate, the Iraqis are rational enough to work out where their best interest lies.

It was famously said that the Vietnam War was lost on television. In this instance, the Iraq War's being lost only on television. In Iraq, it's a tremendous victory.

And, quite reasonably, they figure it doesn't lie with a psychotic death cult that nowadays mainly blows up Muslims on buses, in shopping markets, schools, and even mosques. That's the worst corporate diversification since Seagram's bought Universal Pictures. And at least Seagram's still made whisky; Zarqawi isn't killing a lot of infidels these days.

So Iraq's hearts and minds are operating far more rationally than the Democrats, who these days are both heartless, in their indifference to the aspirations of ordinary Arabs, and mindless, in their calculation of their own best interests. I find Chirac-Schroeder obstructionism easier to understand than the Dean-Boxer variety. For EU politicians, as those French and German poll numbers indicate, there's not a lot of good options when half the babies in your maternity wards are Muslim. But what's the thinking behind what the Democrats are doing?

Easy, you say: It's naked partisan politics. And, to be sure, the broader culture has kind of internalized it as such, to the point where, for example, Dan Balz can publish a huge piece in the *Washington Post* that from its headline down—"Hillary Clinton Crafts Centrist Stance on War"—assumes that it's perfectly natural to talk about the foreign policy and national security of one's own country entirely in political terms. For Balz and for everyone he quotes in the piece, the point of a "policy on Iraq" is not to have a policy that affects Iraq in any real sense but to have a policy that advances domestic political fortunes. "Iraq" might as well be a board game you're in the national playoffs of.

Example: "Her refusal to advocate a speedy exit from Iraq may reflect a more accurate reading of public anxiety about the choices now facing the country." Note that Balz takes it for granted that Senator Rodham Clinton should have no principled position on Iraq, no strategic view of the Muslim world, no philosophical preference as to America's mission abroad, no genuine concerns about security, etc. Indeed, he's implicitly arguing that the greatest strength of Hillary as a viable Democratic presidential candidate—poor Joe Lieberman's "Joementum" won't even place him in the Top Ten in the Iowa caucus—is that she's the least encumbered with anything that will prevent her from agreeing with whatever the 10 P.M. internal polling numbers are showing.

Take that headline: What would a "centrist stance" be on, say, the Second World War? Every few days, some media outlet or other runs a piece about how Bush is "in a bubble"—and no doubt he is, to one degree or another, as busy world leaders tend to be, by definition. But the American media raging that Bush is in a bubble are the equivalent of that famous British newspaper headline: "Fog in Channel. Continent Cut Off." Whatever bubble Bush is in, it's a vast jostling metropolis of diverse peoples stretching to the horizon compared with the shrunken little bubble the Democrats and the media inhabit, reinforcing each other's illusions, like two madmen playing Chinese whispers. No serious person—by which I mean a fellow who's aware there's a real country called "Iraq" and it's in a part of the world called "the Middle East"—could read that Balz analysis without weeping with laughter. Pseudo-policies are soberly considered as if they had any meaning in reality: Should we withdraw from Europe six months after D-Day? Or commit ourselves to a phased drawing down over three to nine months? Clearly, if we announce we'll be leaving the Continent by October 27, that might embolden Herr Hitler. But, if we say 10 percent of our forces might remain until February 1947, that will give us a more flexible exit strategy with strong centrist appeal.

REALITY CHECK

Meanwhile, back on Planet Earth, even the media are occasionally obliged to explain the disconnect between received wisdom on Iraq and the actual physical territory that goes by that name. "85 percent of people in the capital are looking to the future with great enthusiasm," noted *Der Spiegel*, as impeccably anti-Bush as any publication on the planet, but nonetheless reporting the economic boom, rising incomes, etc., now enjoyed by many Iraqis. The magazine went on: "How does this happily expectant mood fit in with the bloody scenes of bombings and shootings, the reports of kidnappings, curfews, and shortages?" How indeed? Over to you, media-ethics professors.

It's not difficult: I said a year and a half ago that the way to look at Iraq is that the Sunni Triangle is Northern Ireland, Kurdistan is Scotland, and the Shiite south is England. Don't let a pub bombing in Ballymena prevent you from investing in that privatized telecom company in London.

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I'm not one of those fellows minded to defer to Jack Murtha because he was a hero in the last war. You could have said the same of Marshal Pétain, and Churchill never listened to him. But I carelessly assumed Murtha did, in fact, have something to say. Instead, as he told *Newsweek*—in one of those "Bush in the Bubble" stories—he's piqued because the president didn't reply to his memo, which, rather than getting hoots of derision, is now regarded as the greatest affront to constitutional propriety since Jim Jeffords failed to land an invite to the White House's Teacher of the Year reception, for which slight he flipped control of the Senate to Tom Daschle. (Remember him?) If Murtha and *Newsweek* weren't trapped in their own bubble, they might understand that a "principled stand" has to be more than a guy whining that the president of the United States won't return his calls: "The White House has made no attempt to reach out to Murtha since then. 'None. None. Zero. Not one call,' a baffled Murtha told *Newsweek*. 'I don't know who the hell they're talking to. If they talked to people, they wouldn't get these outbursts. If they'd talked to me, it wouldn't have happened.'"

I know who the hell they're talking to: On Iraq, the White House is talking to rather a lot of people. They're called "Iraqis." But Murtha is now the lion of the moment, Cindy Sheehan and Joseph Wilson IV merged into the Murtha of all anti-war heroes. So what if there's no crushing of his dissent, only a sad man who was crushed by being dissed.

But let's take it as read that I'm a neocon hack clinging to my feeble Wolfowitz-Perle script as Kurdistan secedes and Shiite theocrats seize the south and Zarqawi commands overwhelming support from the Sunni people. Assume that John Kerry is right that "young American soldiers" are "going into the homes of Iraqis in the dead of night, terrorizing kids and children, you know, women" and that those rampaging Rumsfeldian torturers have brutalized so many of the Iraqi people that they're unified against us.

Even so, even as crude political finessing, will this pitch work for the Democrats? No. Listen to Howard Dean and Nancy Pelosi. They didn't become leaders because some freak accident took out the other contenders. They head the party because they speak for it. It's one thing to be defeatist, but the perverse triumphalism of Dean's defeatism will keep his party mired in the minority through 2006 and 2008. Even if they were right, what's the "meta-story," as they say, of Mad How's soundbite? We're the party that glories in defeatism? "Vote for us. We told you Americans were losers and we're right." Even as shameless self-interest, the Defeaticrat position is a flop.

Unlike those depressed Continentals, Americans are not a pessimistic people, especially when they've got nothing to be pessimistic about. The tragedy is that, on so-called "liberal" terms, this is a war Democrats ought to be gung-ho for: More Iraqis participate in the democratic process than Americans; Afghanistan has more women in electoral politics than Canada. Meanwhile, in the most powerful nation on the planet, the two-party system is seizing up because one party's gone nuts. From Murtha's "We're all doomed unless we quit by Tuesday" to John Kerry's "I was against setting deadlines before I was for them," the Defeaticrats simply have no serious contribution to make to the most pressing issue of the age. Shame on them, trapped in a quagmire of the mind with no exit strategy in sight. **NR**

■ **AT WAR II**

Why We're There

We went into Iraq, and persist there now, for sound reasons

DAVID B. RIVKIN JR. &
LEE A. CASEY

THE Bush administration has remained largely on the defensive in the escalating war of words over the merits of its decision to invade Iraq in 2003. In contesting the Democrats' key anti-war allegation—that the president "lied" the country into Iraq by misrepresenting the available intelligence—the White House has concentrated on the indisputable fact that everyone, Republicans and Democrats, Bush-administration officials and their Clinton-administration predecessors, the U.S. and dozens of foreign countries, believed that Saddam Hussein maintained stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, at the least, and probably had an active nuclear program as well. There are, however, a number of other, equally compelling points that can and should be emphasized in defending the administration's Iraq policy.

THE LAW

First and foremost, it should be made clear that the legal case for war against Saddam's regime—a subject of continuing debate in Europe, the U.N., and the international-law professoriate—has not been undercut in any way, and certainly not by the failure to find WMD stockpiles in Iraq. This is true regardless of whether the war's legality is based on: the inherent right of the United States and its coalition allies to defend themselves against threats to their security; U.N. Security Council Resolution 678, which authorized the use of force against Iraq in 1991 both to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait and to restore peace and security in the region, and which has never been withdrawn; Security Council Resolution 1441, passed in the fall of 2002 and finding Iraq to be in "material breach" of its obligations under various preceding resolutions; or some combination of the above. None of these justifications depended on the actual existence in Iraq of WMD stockpiles, and the use of military force was not, therefore, "illegal."

In this connection, it should be emphasized that at no time was it the responsibility of the U.N. inspection teams, or the United States and its allies, to establish that Saddam Hussein retained a WMD capability. The onus of proving that he had fully disarmed was always on Saddam. This was the price of an armistice, and of keeping his odious regime in power following Iraq's defeat in the

Messrs. Rivkin and Casey are partners in the Washington, D.C., offices of Baker & Hostetler LLP, and served in the Justice Department under Presidents Reagan and George H. W. Bush. The views here expressed are their own.

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first Gulf War. From a legal point of view, his failure to meet this burden fully justified military action.

LIVING WITH SADDAM

It is perhaps more pertinent to the current debate, however, that the threat assessment upon which the Bush administration acted was fundamentally sound. The only mistake in its calculus, made by the CIA and numerous foreign intelligence services, was positing that Saddam possessed stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons—as well as a concealed nuclear-weapons program—after 1991. It was, however, an honest mistake. The claim that Bush lied about Saddam's WMD is itself a lie. There is no doubt that the administration sincerely believed that Saddam retained a substantial WMD arsenal.

Indeed, the U.S. viewed the WMD threat as so serious that all of its pre-war planning, including the timing of the attack and the actual combat operations, was conducted in the full expectation that Saddam would use at least chemical weapons against U.S. troops. U.S. troops carried gas masks and chemical suits into battle. Moreover, it would have made no sense for the administration to rely so heavily on the WMD threat to publicly justify military action if it knew that no WMD would be found once Saddam was toppled.

the sanctions against Saddam Hussein's government. Partly for commercial reasons, partly driven by reflexive anti-Americanism, partly because of Saddam's Oil-for-Food bribes, and partly in simple diplomatic exhaustion, France, Russia, and China were eager to grant the regime in Baghdad a clean bill of health. And in any case, even if an all-out U.S.-led diplomatic effort could have resuscitated the sanctions policy for a time, it was fundamentally unsustainable for the long haul. Even the most targeted sanctions would have hurt individual Iraqis more than Saddam, whose allies had made adroit use of Iraqi suffering, some real and some exaggerated, to advance their agenda.

Moreover, once the sanctions regime finally collapsed, other efforts to keep Saddam "in the box" would probably also have failed. The legality of the Anglo-American-enforced no-fly zones would certainly have been challenged. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine that the Turkish government would have allowed America to conduct continued combat missions against Iraq from its territory once Saddam was no longer the subject of international sanctions. At the same time, the specter of Saddam's brutally reestablishing his control over Iraq's Kurds and Shiites in the early 1990s, and his survival after ten years of war and sanctions, had buttressed his prestige in the Arab world.

In this context, it is doubtful that Iraq's neighbors would have been able to sustain a long-term containment strategy similar to NATO's policy toward the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Had Saddam regained his international legitimacy, along with the practical (if not formal) end of sanctions, other states in the region would likely have tried to reconcile themselves with his regime, U.S. efforts to oust him having failed. The fear of Saddam felt by key Persian Gulf leaders, and their resulting anxiety to participate in any anti-Saddam ventures, was vividly manifested by their frantic efforts to obtain unambiguous assurances in 2002 and 2003 that the United States would finally effect regime change in Baghdad. These efforts—in the person of Prince Bandar, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the U.S., who demanded commitments directly from President Bush—are vividly described in Bob Woodward's *Plan of Attack*.

Saddam Hussein had spent years and billions of dollars developing chemical, biological, and nuclear programs for a reason; and, like Adolf Hitler, he never disguised his ultimate ambitions.

In any case, Saddam's supposed WMD stockpiles were only one aspect of the threat calculus. The other critical elements encompassed the undisputed facts that Saddam had proven himself to be an aggressive and unpredictable actor in a highly important and vulnerable area of the world; that he had had WMD capabilities (including a mature nuclear-weapons program) in the past; that he had already deployed and used WMD against both Iranians and Iraq's own citizens; that he had sheltered known terrorists and aided active terrorist organizations; and that he had never fully cooperated with the U.N. inspection teams. In other words, Saddam Hussein was a dangerous man behaving as if he had something to hide.

Significantly, none of the major opponents of military action in Iraq—including and especially France and Germany—ever claimed that Saddam had, in fact, met his obligations and was no longer a threat. Like those members of Congress who voted against the use of force in the fall of 2002, their alternative was to continue a policy of containment. They did not, of course, offer to take up the burdens and risks of this policy: It is the United States and Britain that would have continued indefinitely to enforce the no-fly zones and guarantee the region's security from Saddam.

Even more to the point, the U.N. sanctions regime was crumbling. Indeed, by the end of Bill Clinton's second term, Britain and the United States were the only permanent members of the Security Council who supported continuing (let alone tightening)

Amidst this cascade of negative foreign-policy consequences of Saddam's revival, the military threat from Iraq also would have increased. Although Saddam evidently chose not to reconstitute his WMD stockpiles while the sanctions were in place, the notion that he would have forgone these weapons once sanctions were lifted is fanciful. Saddam Hussein had spent years and billions of dollars developing chemical, biological, and nuclear programs for a reason; and, like Adolf Hitler, he never disguised his ultimate ambitions. Saddam saw himself as a new Saladin, a man destined to become the Arab world's dominant if not actual leader. Both men were, in fact, born in the same town (Tikrit),

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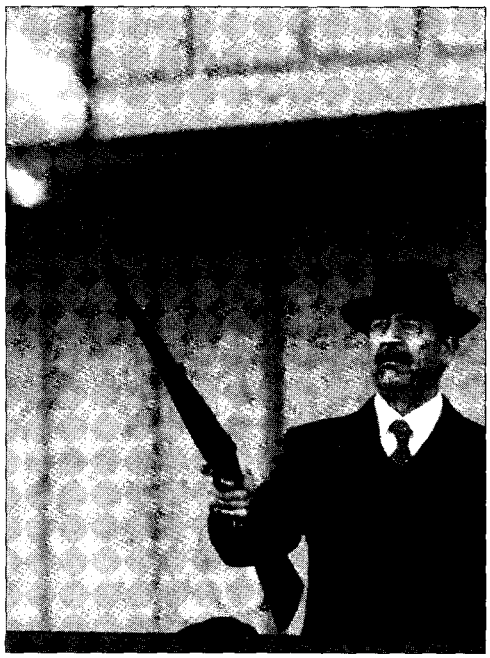
although Saladin was of Kurdish and not Arab extraction. WMD played a major symbolic role in advancing Saddam's grandiose ambitions, and over the long run that symbolic role would likely have become a literal one.

The fact that Saddam appears to have practiced an elaborate deception reminiscent of Nikita Khrushchev's famous missile bluff of the 1950s, proclaiming that he was fully disarmed but acting as if he retained his WMD stockpiles, simply underscores the extent to which he saw WMD as a psychological cornerstone of Iraq's grand strategy. With hundreds of billions of dollars of oil revenues at his disposal, and freed from the need to play a cat-and-mouse game with the U.N. inspectors, he could easily have re-created these stockpiles and reconstituted his nuclear program.

Finally, even without WMD, the wealth, population, and strategic location of Iraq would have allowed Saddam to continue posing a grave threat to the stability of the Persian Gulf region. While this point is all but forgotten in today's debates, it was a key aspect of the U.N. resolutions on Iraq. These effectively required Iraq not just to evacuate Kuwait and disarm, but also to cease being a "threat to peace" in the region. How that threat could have been eliminated while Saddam remained in power is not apparent.



AND THEN CAME SEPTEMBER 11

The threat assessment that led to the 2003 invasion of Iraq was inevitably shaped by al-Qaeda's attacks on the United States in 2001. Unfortunately, this aspect of the debate has focused almost entirely on whether Saddam Hussein was actually involved in planning or facilitating those attacks. It now seems clear that Iraq was not directly involved, but the Bush administration never claimed it was. What the administration did point out was that Saddam Hussein sponsored terrorism. His Baathist regime had directly supported global terrorist activities and provided sanctuary for individual terrorists, including Abu Abbas, the man responsible for the 1985 attack on the *Achille Lauro* and the murder of American Leon Klinghoffer, and Abu Nidal, the mastermind of attacks at El Al ticket counters in Europe that left 18 people dead. And, as described by *The Weekly Standard*'s Stephen F. Hayes, captured Iraqi intelligence archives describe numerous contacts between Iraqi officials and al-Qaeda operatives.

Moreover, the notion that radical Islamists and secular Arab fascists would not make common cause against the United States simply because they have different ideologies is highly dubious. To begin with, Saddam had in recent years tried to win the support of Islamists with such gestures as the addition of a Koranic verse to the Iraqi flag. The more fundamental point is that, whatever their differences, Baathists and Islamists share the goal of driving American forces and influence from the Middle East. We have seen Middle Eastern secular and religious groups cooperate routinely in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine. More generally, history is replete with examples of ideologically diverse states and groups allied against a common enemy. Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan had ideologies that involved notions of their own racial superiority and would, therefore, have been incompatible with each other over the long term. Yet they cooperated with each other during the Second World War; and few would argue today that President Roosevelt was foolhardy to view them as posing a joint threat to America's security, or that he was wrong to meet that threat in a decisive manner.

Far more important, however, is the fact that September 11 fundamentally shifted our strategic calculus of what constitutes a tolerable threat level. The attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and potentially the U.S. Capitol or White House dramatized the extent of American vulnerability and the degree to which America's will had been underestimated by its enemies. Osama bin Laden considered the United States to be a "weak horse" doubtless in part because Saddam had survived a decade despite what he must have taken to be America's best efforts at stopping him. In any case, once al-Qaeda showed that entities in the Middle East could successfully attack the American homeland, the danger of allowing Saddam to endure was substantially magnified. Regime change in Baghdad had been an avowed American policy since the Clinton administration, but its execution gained urgency after September 11, which dramatically altered our geopolitical paradigm and provided a powerful justification for acting immediately—especially since, by 2003, it was clear that Saddam could not be removed from power by either diplomatic means or covert action (all of the CIA's efforts to facilitate a coup in Baghdad having failed).

WINNING THE DEBATE

Of late, the administration has become more effective in arguing that the United States cannot simply withdraw from Iraq—a course of action urged by a growing chorus of Democrats and even some Republicans. Such a withdrawal would encourage and embolden the Islamists, just as the American withdrawals from Somalia in 1994 and Lebanon in 1984 informed bin Laden's calculations about U.S. staying power in the Middle East. In addition, there is every reason to believe that a precipitous American pullout would lead to the Talibanization of Iraq, which would serve as an even more congenial host for al-Qaeda and its allies than was Afghanistan before its liberation. Abandoning our Iraqi mission would also validate, in a practical if not a legal sense, the terrorist tactics used by the "insurgents." If the United States cannot face and effectively counter these tactics, it will indeed become a Gulliver bound by the world's most vicious Lilliputians.

The cost in American blood and treasure in Iraq has been great—although far less than in previous wars, including Vietnam. The administration in Washington and military commanders in Iraq have obviously made mistakes, and have occasionally been bested by the enemy. This, however, is to be

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expected in any war. War cannot be choreographed. Battlefield intelligence is always imperfect, uncertainties and unforeseen events foil the best-laid plans, and the enemy adapts and learns how to offset one's strengths and exploit one's weaknesses. The victor is not the party that makes no mistakes, but the one that learns from its mistakes better and quicker. Both American forces in Iraq and the Bush administration have learned much in the past two years, and U.S. military operations in Iraq have, on the whole, been remarkably flexible and successful.

But even if the Iraq war had been fundamentally mishandled so far, it would not follow that withdrawing is the right amelioration. Recognizing this, the war's critics have begun alleging that the U.S. military presence in Iraq is making the insurgency more powerful and creating new jihadists worldwide. But even if the U.S. military presence has antagonized some Iraqis, many others—especially Shiites and Kurds, the past victims of Baathist violence—want U.S. troops to remain until the insurgency has been defeated. That insurgency is fueled both by foreign fighters and by the desire of some Sunnis to prevent the creation of a genuinely pluralistic society in which Shiites and Kurds enjoy access to political and economic power. Even if U.S. forces evacuated and the foreign fighters followed—not necessarily a desirable outcome from America's perspective—these unreconstructed Baathists would remain. More broadly, withdrawal would be taken as an acknowledgment that we cannot engage terrorists or their sponsors on their own soil, and set a precedent for isolationism and retreat.

Emboldened by opinion polls showing eroding support for the Iraq mission, the Bush administration's political opponents have portrayed our choice as being immediate withdrawal or phased but prompt disengagement. Victory is no longer discussed or, if truth be told, desired.

A defeat in Iraq means a failed Bush presidency—and that has become the critics' overarching goal, regardless of costs to American interests. Those costs would be high indeed. They would not be limited to a renewed "Vietnam Syndrome" and decline in American prestige. Insurgency would surely be used by future enemies of the United States, the assumption being that America cannot win a protracted engagement on foreign territory—be it with a formidable adversary like North Korea, a second-class foe like Syria, or even a third-rate regional power like Venezuela.

Failing to complete what has been started in Iraq would, in other words, light the way for every one of America's future enemies, and would severely complicate American diplomacy and defense interests well beyond the Middle East. The perception of America's military prowess is critical to its ability to maintain friendships and alliances around the world, including with such countries as Japan and India, which look with alarm upon China's growing military might.

The administration should accept that it is now fighting a two-front war—one in Iraq and one in Washington. Of the two, the Washington-centered war of words may be the decisive one; if the president wins the battle of public opinion, there is little doubt that U.S. forces can win the war on the ground in Iraq. Fortunately, recent speeches by both the president and the vice president suggest that the administration has accepted this stark reality, and that it is beginning to fight back. **NR**

■ **TRADITION**

A Trapp Family Christmas

Shouldn't this year be more spiritual? Good luck!

ALOÏSE BUCKLEY HEATH

One of the reasons—I say one of the reasons because I could think of *several* others if I put my mind to it—that I kept on having babies for years after all my classmates were taking turns being president of the Planned Parenthood Association was that I always thought a big family would be such fun at Christmas. Which who doesn't, including people like me, who know? I know why Ben Heath, who is tied to me by the bonds of marriage, has the spirit of Christmas around Thanksgiving and the spirit of Ash Wednesday around Christmas. I keep telling him I know. "I know," I say. "I know. I know. I know."

I know we always get more glitter and glue on the floor than on the candles, and that I never remember to wipe it up until the dining-room carpet (new last January) is permanently (though not uninterestingly, I always think) spangled. I know I look absolutely insane crawling around in the snow for weeks before Christmas, putting candy canes on window sills and then galloping madly off in the dark, jingling sleighbells and shouting, "Ho! Ho! Ho!" I know the newsboy would rather have two dollar bills than a $1.95 flashlight wrapped in green paper and silver ribbon with "MERVYN" spelled out in red Scotch tape. I know no one can eat those Cut 'n' Bake cookies after the children have decorated them with green sugar and cinnamon hearts (Christmas trees), and then with more cinnamon hearts and melted marshmallow (Santa Clauses), and then with more melted marshmallow and pink crayon (angels). I know it's un-Gesell and not even altogether Spock to match candid blue eye to candid blue eye with a ten-year-old and say: "But, sweetie, how should *I* know why Polly's Santa Claus is really her father? Maybe her father *has* to be her Santa Claus, poor little thing! Maybe Santa Claus just doesn't *like* Polly. Ever think of that?"

I also know ten children who aren't going to see this issue of NATIONAL REVIEW.

I know all that. What I didn't know till this year was what Ben meant, every Christmastide, when he tossed out, not at all at random, the words "materialistic" and "spiritual." What I always thought he meant was that it would be materialistic for Alison and Betsey and Jennifer and Timothy to get a Chatty Cathy apiece, but spiritual for them to share one. I mean, that's what I thought until one afternoon last week.

A Christmas piece by Aloïse Buckley Heath (1918–1967) is an NR tradition.

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That afternoon they were all in the coat closet (well, they were, that's all; they *like* the coat closet) making out their Christmas lists. Pam, who can spell, was helping the ones who can't write; and Alison, who is magic, was helping the ones who can't talk. I had my ear at the crack in the door, listening, because I'm still trying to hear one of those childhood conversations whose innocent candor tears at your heartstrings. You've read about them, I'm sure.

What I heard was my dear little ones calculating how much more each of them would get for Christmas if they didn't have so many brothers and sisters to share the loot. They itemized, giving reasons for their choice, the siblings they would gladly exchange for a hockey stick or an army bugle or a Barbie doll with a different dress for every single day of the week. From what I could hear through the crack, *nobody* kept Buckley and Timothy, which is understandable—let's face it—but not nice.

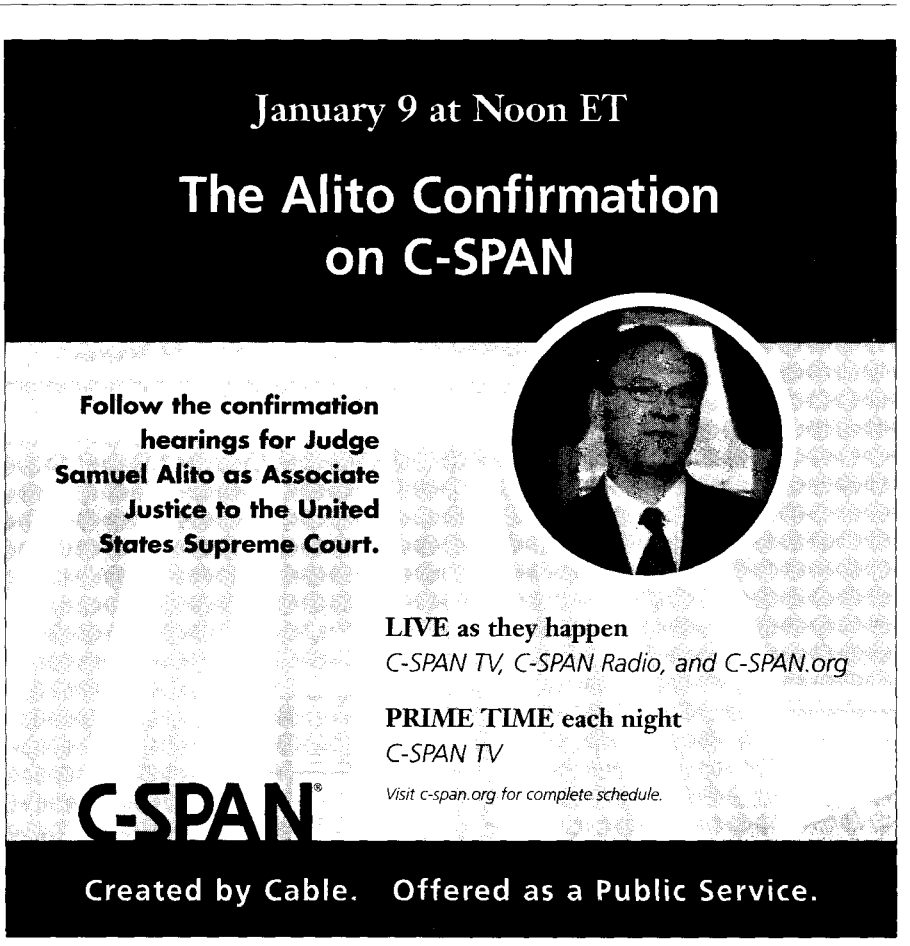
Then and there I decided (yes, *again*) that there is more to old Ben than meets the eye, and that this Christmas the Heaths would be spiritual. Spiritual *also*, I mean. At my age you can't just cut those old materialistic ways right out of your life. And by coincidence I happened to be reading, at the time, a book called *Around the Year with the Trapp Family*. Actually, I was reading it to find out why the Trapps play the recorder better than we do, a fact which is widely bruited by those who have heard us, though not necessarily the Trapps. It turned out, though, that the Trapp family spends its year not practicing the recorder, as I had hoped, but "Keeping the Feasts and Seasons of the Christian Year," which is, in fact, the subtitle of the book. We plunged into keeping the Christmas Season of the Christian Year like the Trapps. Some of us (me) plunged more enthusiastically than others (Jim, Pam, John, Priscilla, Buckley, Alison, Betsey, Jennifer, Timothy, Janet, and their father).

Certainly some of the things the Trapp family does at Christmas are not entirely suited to the Heath family. I know. I *know*. And some—give me that much—I didn't even try. Like baking the traditional *Spekulatius* on December 6 (St. Nicholas's Day), for instance; or the traditional *Kletzenbrot* on December 21 (St. Thomas's Day); or even the traditional *Lebzelten*, *Lebkuchen*, Spanish Wind, Marzipan, Rum Balls, Nut *Busserln*, Coconut *Busserln*, *Stangerln*, *Pfeffernüsse*, and Plain Cookies on December 23. Especially since the freezer was bulging with all those still Uncut 'n' Unbaked rolls of cookie dough. Nor did I consider for more than one mad moment suggesting that all the children take a nap before Midnight Mass and that their father awaken them by initiating a procession from room to room with a lighted candle, singing "Shepherds Up!" (each verse pitched a half-tone higher than the last), though I think it would be lovely, myself. Maybe when Ben is older . . . mellower . . .

We *did* make an Advent Wreath with four red candles, and it was beautiful; but John and Priscilla are Junior Fire Marshals, and though they said it was all right to hang the wreath from the ceiling on four red ribbons, they wouldn't even discuss letting us light the candles after the wreath was hung. Anyway, I know perfectly well that Ben Heath would light off for the South Seas before he would light the candles, stand under the wreath, read the Gospel for the day, and listen to the children sing: "Ye heavens, dew drop from above and rain ye clouds the Just One . . ." Even if I could get the children to sing it. Are your children *giggly*?

The Trapps say that "Silent Night" should be sung for the first time on Christmas Eve, and I agree with them, and the children agreed with me, which would have been enough to make me abandon the whole idea if I hadn't been so bemused with good will and all. It wasn't till I got the notes from Mr. Jones, Mrs. Miano, Mr. Segar, Mrs. Arnold, Miss Billingham, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Larratt, and Miss Bates that I remembered that the Fourth Form Glee Club Concert, the Grade VII Carol Sing, the Grade VI Christmas Vespers, the Grade III Christmas Play, the Grade II Christmas Chapel, the Grade I Christmas Assembly, the Kindergarten Christmas Program, and the Nursery School Christmas Party (to all of which I have been kindly invited) have three things in common: rehearsals, Heaths, and "Silent Night." *I quite understand*, I wrote Mr. Jones, Mrs. Miano, Mr. Segar, Mrs. Arnold, Miss Billingham, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Larratt, and Miss Bates.

I really didn't see how the *Christkindl* custom could go wrong, though. I *still* don't. In the Trapp family, at the beginning of Advent,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The Alito Confirmation on C-SPAN
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everyone writes his name on a piece of paper and the papers are put in a basket, which is passed around as soon as the children have finished singing "Ye heavens, dew drop from above." Everybody picks a name from the basket, and the pickee, if you follow me, becomes the picker's secret *Christkindl*, and the idea is, you do your *Christkindl* a good turn every day until Christmas without letting him know who you are. It sounds simple, spiritual, and also fun, doesn't it? And it works out *beautifully* in the Trapp family. In fact, through Advent until Christmas, the Trapp household resounds with the glad cries of *Christkindlen* who have found their shoes shined, their dollhouses tidied up, or the table already set the day it was their turn. But there *are* a few technical problems that I feel you should know about, just in case you plan to be spiritual next Christmas.

In our house, the first technical problem was Jim. Jim said he was too old for this kind of thing, and I said, what did he mean, too old: Most of the Trapps are older than he is; and he said, not those dumb kids that sang that dumb Do-Re-Mi song aren't older than he is; and I said, well, if he thought he was too old at 15, what did he think I was?; and he said too old at 42 (*never* tell your children your age), but anyhow, I won, because after all, I'm the one who has to sign his driver-education permission slip—and also, if I didn't drive all over New England every Saturday to see the Kingswood JV wrestle, who would? Then the others said, what about Timothy and Janet? Timothy and Janet were too little to do good turns to their *Christkindlen*, so why should they be anybody else's *Christkindlen*? I said, I must say, this didn't sound very much like the spirit of Christmas to me, and I would take care of the babies' *Christkindlen* if everyone was so worried, and let's *draw*, for heaven's sake!

The Trapps, not the Heaths!

So we drew, and five of them drew their own names and Janet ate one, which turned out, after we hit her on the back, to be John. So we made another slip for John (a piece of paper our baby has eaten is distinctive) and we drew again and eight of them drew their own names. I said, maybe it would work out better if I drew a name for each of them, and they said, no sir, not and have you know who everybody's *Christkindl* is and comparing what everybody did for their *Christkindlen*, no *sir*, Mother, none of that stuff. Jim and Pam said that if they could have paper and pencil and peace and quiet they could probably work it out by mathematical probabilities, but it was getting pretty late, so I called them up by ages, and before Jim drew I took out his name, and before Pam drew I took out her name and put back Jim's, and so on. (Well, unless I *tell* you, how will you ever know how to do it?)

When we had all drawn (which took far more time to do than to read about, no matter what you're thinking), everybody opened his little slip of paper "at a given signal." That's how the Trapps do it, and that's how we did it. I said: "Everybody ready? One. Two. Three. Open. Well, pick it up and open it *now*, Alison! Everybody does not have to fold their paper up again and forget the names they drew. . . . Besides, how could they? . . . Not fold the papers, for heaven's sake; forget the *names*! . . . Well, all right . . . all *right*, I said; *we're starting over*. Everybody ready? One. Ready—Alison, anybody would think you were five and a half. Two. Three. Open. ALISON!!"

So we opened our little slips of paper at a given signal (the Trapps said "a" given signal, after all, not *which*) (what irritates me is that Alison can't even *read*!) and everybody learned the name of his secret—*secret*, mind you—*Christkindl*. This is another uniformly joyful moment in the Trapp family. At this moment in the Heath family, Jim looked up from his slip, glared at John, and groaned. John looked up from his slip, glared at Jim, and made vomiting noises. Priscilla said: "Oh, *Mother*, do I have to have that pest?"

Buckley said: "Mother, how do you think that makes a poor little boy feel to have everybody in this whole absolute world call him a pest every absolute minute?"

Everybody nudged everybody else. "Jim has John. John has Jim. Priscilla has Buckley," they told each other.

The non-readers came running up to find out who their *Christkindlen* were. "Pam," I whispered into Betsey's ear.

"Pam," shrieked Betsey.

"Betsey has Pam," everybody told everybody else.

"Tim-Tim, but don't tell," I whispered into Jennifer's ear.

She flung her arms around Timothy's head. "Tim-Tim, I *know* sumpeen. I *know* sumpeen, Tim-Tim," she roared.

"Jennifer has Timothy," everybody told everybody else. The baby ate her paper again, but it was all right this time: I knew whose name she had eaten. I had arranged for us to draw each other, because we're in love.

A few minutes later they thundered upstairs to homework or bed, and even over the rattling of the window panes I heard the negotiations starting. "Well, then, will you trade Priscilla for Alison and a nickel? For Alison and a dime? For me not hiding your shell collection? For me not hitting you in the stomach as hard as I can?"

Actually, it didn't turn out too badly. After a few days of such good turns as reporting that a *Christkindl* hadn't done his arithmetic because he was going to copy Georgie's before school tomorrow (and he just can't *learn* anything that way, can he, Mother?), or throwing a *Christkindl*'s cherished leather jacket into the washing machine (because it was so absolutely *filthy* he could have got *germs* from it, Mother), or taking the batteries out of a *Christkindl*'s flashlight because she reads under the covers after bedtime (and that's why practically *everybody* practically *constantly* goes blind, isn't it, Mother?), everybody was getting pretty tense, not to mention bloody, until one of them—I haven't asked which—found a solution: Every Sunday now, they each buy seven penny lollipops, and every night they slip a lollipop under their *Christkindl*'s pillow. Well, I *know* that doesn't sound so terribly spiritual, but it's better than what they used to do. What they used to do was steal each other's lollipops.

I wouldn't want anybody to think that my baby and I have sunk to such a mundane relationship, though. We haven't had to change our routine at all. Every morning Janet allows her *Christkindl* to rock her a little; and every evening I rock my *Christkindl* a little. **NR**

BETTMANN/CORBIS

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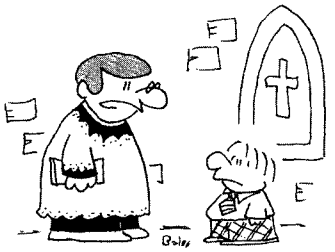
HELP!!!!

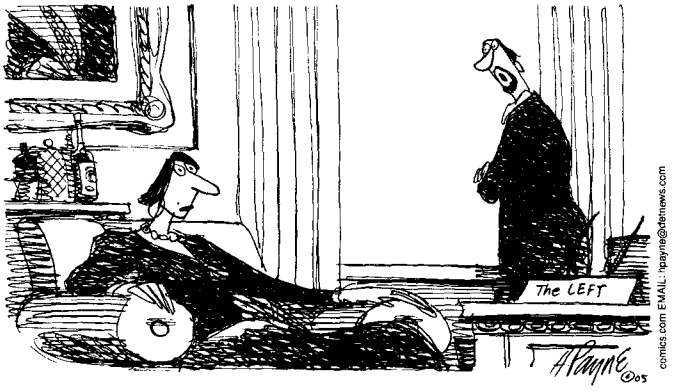
Pelosi's Limb

She's out on it like a mad squirrel;
The tip is beginning to bend.
The spectators cheer Nancy onward—
The people's a beast—toward her end.
The Democrats, Murtha excepted,
Peer ceilingward or at their toes,
Though Howard, to everyone's horror,
Keeps tum-tumming "Anything Goes."

—W. H. von Dreele



"Yes, you're supposed to honor your father and your mother and your stepfather and your birth father, and your father's first wife, and . . ."



"We were promised WMDs! How were we duped into a war for constitutional rights, freedom of speech, and women's suffrage?!"

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the long view

ROB LONG

Transcript: *Larry King Live*, December 25th, 2006

LARRY KING: "We're back! Don't forget, tomorrow night! The whole hour with Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter! They've got a new book out, folks, and it's going to blow your socks off. It's called 'The Erotic First Couple' and it's all about . . . well, tune in tomorrow. Gonna be a hot show. It's a very, very sexy book. I can't even show you the cover, according to the FCC. Anyways. From Sunflower, Mississippi, hello!"

CALLER: "Hi, Larry. Hi, Mrs. Claus."

LARRY KING: "What's your question, caller?"

CALLER: "I just want to know if there's been any reaction to the book so far from her ex-husband?"

LARRY KING: "Good question. So? Did Santa ring in?"

MRS. CLAUS: "His lawyers did, Larry. You know, after all those years I really felt that he'd at least want to talk to me directly. Instead, I got a very threatening letter from his attorneys basically saying that if I went through with the book they'd sue me and ruin me and all like that."

LARRY KING: "And so far?"

MRS. CLAUS: "Well, you know, that's the interesting thing. Total silence, Larry. Nothing."

LARRY KING: "Of course, he's awfully busy this time of year."

MRS. CLAUS: "Please. Don't tell me that. I was there, remember? He's got that thing so well organized. Half the time it's not even him in the sleigh."

LARRY KING: "You're kidding?"

MRS. CLAUS: "It's a system, Larry. He's got it worked out. Sort of like Johnny Carson in the old days, you know? Always taking time off. Never there."

LARRY KING: "But, you know, it works, right?"

MRS. CLAUS: "No one's saying it doesn't work, Larry. I mean, the toys get under the tree. That's what he used to shout at us in the meetings. 'It's about toys under trees, people!' And you know, we did it. We just . . . did it."

LARRY KING: "But it wasn't enough?"

MRS. CLAUS: "At a certain point, Larry, you want a lover. You want someone to hold. Someone to go on trips with."

LARRY KING: "Listen, I've been married enough times to sing a few bars of that! The book is 'No Cookies for Me: Loving an Icon and Losing Myself, the Mrs. Claus Story.' So what's next?"

MRS. CLAUS: "We're talking to one of the networks about some kind of show."

LARRY KING: "A 'Desperate Housewives' type situation? I mean, you got a good hook for that."

MRS. CLAUS: "More reality-based, I think. I can't really talk about it. We're still developing it."

LARRY KING: "From the North Pole, hello!"

CALLER: "Hi, Larry. Hi, Francine."

MRS. CLAUS: "Hi."

CALLER: "Francine, what are you doing?"

MRS. CLAUS: "This is awkward."

LARRY KING: "Is this who I think it is?"

CALLER: "Francine, c'mon. This is so undignified."

MRS. CLAUS: "It's my story. I'm telling my story. I'm speaking truth to power."

CALLER: "Come off it, Francine."

MRS. CLAUS: "Have you even read the book?"

CALLER: "No, I have not read the book. I'm a little busy right now, Francine. Take a peek at the calendar. December is not exactly my kick-back month."

MRS. CLAUS: "Me, I, my, mine, I, I . . . are you getting it, Larry?"

CALLER: "Look, Francine, I don't want to get into ancient history, okay? But it's not like you didn't know what you were getting when we got married. You knew about the . . . the thing . . . and the elves and the stuff like that."

MRS. CLAUS: "What I wanted was for you to love me."

CALLER: "Francine, I love everybody. That's sort of . . . that's just me, okay?"

MRS. CLAUS: "But me! Love me! And show it once in a while."

CALLER: "Francine, I did the best that I could. With what I had to work with. My family . . . we're not . . . we're not demonstrative, you know?"

LARRY KING: "My father was the most popular guy in Brooklyn! Everybody's pal. But he never told me he loved me."

CALLER: "That's sort of a non sequitur, Larry."

MRS. CLAUS: "I was lonely."

CALLER: "Francine! Listen to yourself! You could have taken classes. You could have gotten back into your orchids or your screenplay-writing."

MRS. CLAUS: "I spent every Christmas alone, Larry."

LARRY KING: "You guys didn't have a special Christmas together?"

CALLER: "Larry, how is that practical?"

LARRY KING: "If you gotta work the holiday, 'cause you're in radio or whatever, you pick a day not in December and just call it Christmas. It's fun. I did it with my wife Mickey. Worked great. And I did it with my wife Sharon. And Julia, too, actually. Kept things spicy."

CALLER: "For some crazy reason I'm stuck on thinking that Christmas is on the 25th of December. Forgive me."

MRS. CLAUS: "Me, me, me, me, I, I, I. And 'round and 'round."

CALLER: "You know what? I've got to go. I'm heading out of cell range."

LARRY KING: "Don't forget, tomorrow night! The erotic first couple!"

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THE ART OF GENN . . .

T. Kennedy Makes Government's No-Fly List
The Ugly American
Qaddafi, Suddenly Repentant
Greenhouse Gasbag
Oil Baron and Benefactor of the United
Europeans Now!
Bill Clinton at the Rain-Soaked Opening of His Presidential Library

Oh!—The talent of Roman Genn! His devilishly dead-on caricatures of notorious ne'er-do-wells have graced the covers and pages of *NR* for years. Now, *National Review* is pleased to bring you his most mockingly sarcastic send-ups of today's leading liberals in this special boxed set of Roman Genn Note Cards.

The folks here at *NR* are always conjuring up supposedly "brilliant" product ideas: But *this* time, *finally*, someone has proposed an idea that truly strikes our fancy—and we think you too will find it appealing, and unquestionably in the brassy, sacred cow–tipping tradition of *National Review*.

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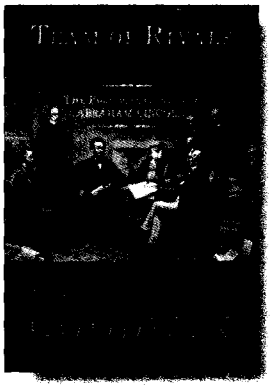
War for the Homeland



Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln, by Doris Kearns Goodwin (Simon & Schuster, 944 pp., $35)

ARTHUR HERMAN

WHAT an irony that just as George W. Bush's presidency and reputation reach their low point, liberal historian Doris Kearns Goodwin comes riding to his rescue. By far her best book, *Team of Rivals* is Goodwin's account of how President Abraham Lincoln managed to turn a cabinet full of bitter former foes into his supporters' club and an indispensable instrument of victory in the Civil War. But the real theme is greatness under trial, and how an underestimated man, the object of scorn and hate to millions, did a job no one else in the country could, and led it through a crisis unlike any other in its history. The book thus sheds an unexpectedly penetrating light on Bush, who ends up resembling Lincoln more than any president has in our lifetime.

"The man is not equal to the hour": Such was political pundit Charles Francis Adams's judgment of Lincoln when the Civil War began. Indeed, the deck was stacked against him the moment he decided to run for president. New York's William Seward, Ohio's Salmon P. Chase, and Missouri's Edward Bates were the Republican party's most distinguished leaders in 1860, grizzled men of gravitas and influence compared with the tall, gawky attorney from Illinois best known for the elections he had lost.

Goodwin reveals that even as Seward and Chase were confidently awaiting their party's nod, Lincoln turned to a savvy quartet of Karl Roves—Illinois lawyers Norman Judd, Leonard Swett, and Stephen Logan, and 330-pound circuit judge David Davis—to work behind the scenes at the Republican convention to make sure Lincoln was everyone's second choice. When the steam ran out of the Seward candidacy on the *second* ballot, and Chase and Bates failed to catch fire, Lincoln was the last man standing.

Republicans and Democrats on the Hill, and the press, were incredulous. They dismissed Lincoln as "a third rate Western lawyer" and an "illiterate partisan" incapable of uttering a grammatical sentence. But the Democrats were in worse shape: They were self-destructing over slavery and secession, and ended up running three separate presidential tickets. Lincoln's victory in November became a foregone conclusion; but whether he could govern a country that was literally pulling itself apart was not—especially when his cabinet included his three bitter rivals, Seward, Chase, and Bates, ready to pounce on his first misstep.

Yet as this book shows, Lincoln's genius first revealed itself in his handling of these touchy egomaniacs. Lincoln humbly reached out to all three, and later to secretary of war Edwin Stanton, for help but not for guidance; and by a combination of beguiling magnanimity and gentle firmness, he was able to show them who was boss. He turned them from doubters into believers in the Lincoln presidency, with the same skill and adroitness that George W. Bush would later show in turning Rumsfeld, Powell, and Cheney into an effective team, and even bringing in former foe John McCain as a useful ally after the 9/11 attacks.

Like Bush, Lincoln had no time for a presidential learning curve. The very first piece of paper he was handed as president was a dispatch from Fort Sumter in South Carolina, saying time was running out for a relief expedition to keep it from surrendering to the secessionists. Pundits like Adams assumed Lincoln would be too weak and ignorant to face the crisis and that Seward would take charge; every member of Lincoln's cabinet except one, including the vaunted Seward, said saving Fort Sumter would be a waste of time and needlessly provoke war.

But Lincoln saw more clearly: He knew that Fort Sumter's fate was the nation's fate. Giving in to the threat of force at the start meant giving in for good. Seward was stunned when Lincoln decided to send a relief force to South Carolina. "Thunder, George!" he said to an aide when he learned Lincoln had rejected his advice. "It cannot be." Lincoln was unable to save Fort Sumter or to stop Virginia, the crown jewel of the South, from joining the Confederacy. But as Goodwin points out, the incident taught Seward a powerful lesson: His president was a man willing to act when others hesitated, for the sake of principle. Seward soon became Lincoln's staunchest ally in the cabinet.

When war did come, Lincoln was hammered, as Bush would be, for not having adequate plans or preparations, especially after the opening defeat at Bull Run in July 1861, and for not having an exit strategy if things went wrong. But Lincoln believed there could be no substitute for victory. What a commentator on CNN might dismiss as his "stubbornness" led him to shut his ears to critics who were less committed to defeating the South, not because they were wiser, but because they refused to confront what was truly at stake: the survival of the United States itself.

For four long years, Lincoln endured attacks from a hostile press, clamorous opposition in Congress, threats of intervention by foreign powers, and a constant stream of bad news from the battlefield. The skill and daring of southern generals like Lee and Jackson disguised the

Mr. Herman's latest book, *To Rule the Waves: How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World*, was released in paperback in November.

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Confederacy's deteriorating position, as the Union death toll mounted day by day. Yet through it all, Goodwin observes, "Lincoln remained remarkably calm, good natured, and self-controlled." The deaths of young men in the war that he and he alone had started, haunted him; but, secure in the knowledge that he had done the right thing by going to war, he persevered to the end.

He put up with the petty rivalries between Seward and Chase, and Bates and postmaster general Montgomery Blair, and forced them to work together; he ignored whisperings that Seward was Lincoln's Dick Cheney, "the president *de facto*" who was running the war into the ground, and had to deal with a resolution passed by his own party in Congress practically begging him to kick Seward out. Lincoln knew the truth. "They wish to get rid of me," he told a friend, "and I am sometimes half disposed to gratify them."

But Lincoln did not quit, as the editor of the *New York Herald* and others urged him to do. He even raised the war's ideological stakes by pushing ahead his Emancipation Proclamation, against the opposition of even his most staunchly anti-slavery cabinet members. He went ahead with plans to arm and train black soldiers, even though the experts said that the blacks couldn't fight and that their presence on the battlefield would only make the southerners fight harder.

Lincoln had understood, even before Bull Run, that "if the issue be distinctly presented—death to the American republic or death to slavery, *slavery must die*," and with it the America that had supported and tolerated slavery for 250 years. In Washington, however, this kind of moral clarity grew more unpopular as the war dragged on. The summer of 1864 brought even Lincoln's staunchest supporters a feeling that the nation was stuck in a quagmire. "Our troops have suffered much and accomplished but little," Navy secretary Gideon Welles wrote on June 20, after battles in which 10,000 or 15,000 men would fall in a single day. Everyone missed the significance of the victory at Gettysburg, and complained that Lee had been allowed to get away; there was also little notice of Lincoln's speech afterward, with its affirmation that "this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom." Even Lincoln told a friend his Gettysburg address had been a "flat failure."

Anti-draft riots had burned through New York City, resulting in nearly 1,000 dead and injured; when Democrats met at their presidential convention that summer, they put together a peace platform so conciliatory that one observer said it read as if Jefferson Davis had written it: "It contemplates surrender and abasement." But the collapse of the Confederate army in front of Atlanta was the "September Surprise" that saved Lincoln's reelection. If the Confederate army had hung on another eight weeks, a Democratic president in 1865 would have given us an intact Confederacy and continued slavery.

Instead, as the light at the end of the tunnel approached, Lincoln's own mood turned inward and became more religious. This shift was reflected in his Second Inaugural Address, with its suggestion that God had given "to both North and South, this terrible war," as punishment for the sin of slavery. This made many in the press furious. The *New York World* accused him of "substituting religion for statesmanship," and the *Tribune* said the Biblical overtones would only prolong the war (the South surrendered little more than a month later).

Lincoln did not care. After the address, he greeted well-wishers at the White House. One was black abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass, who had begun the war considering Lincoln a pro-slavery imbecile and ended up realizing, as Leo Tolstoy would say later of Lincoln, that "his supremacy expresses itself altogether in his peculiar moral power and in the greatness of his character. . . . Our posterity will find him considerably bigger than we do." No persons of color were supposed to enter the reception; but Lincoln saw him, and exclaimed, "Here comes my friend Douglass!" They shook hands and the president asked Douglass how he had liked the speech. "Mr. Lincoln," Douglass said, "that was a sacred effort." Lincoln grinned with delight and said, "I'm glad you liked it!"

Six weeks later Lincoln was struck down by an assassin's bullet. But it was too late: The new America had begun. Goodwin's fine book makes an important contribution to our national understanding of this crucial era. **NR**

Witness

Elia Kazan: A Biography,
by Richard Schickel
(HarperCollins, 544 pp., $29.95)

TERRY TEACHOUT

OUTSIDE of North Korea and the English departments of certain American universities, Hollywood is one of the last places in the world where it's advantageous to be an unrepentant Stalinist. That's why Elia Kazan got into hot water when the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences voted to give him an honorary Oscar in 1999.

You'd think the director of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *On the Waterfront* would have been an easy sell—but of course you'd only think that if you'd forgotten that Kazan, a Communist who changed his mind, "named names" to the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1952, having since decided that Communism was, as he put it, a "dangerous and alien conspiracy" against the "free, open, healthy way of life that gives us self-respect." Because of this lapse from grace, a smallish but significant number of movie stars and lesser functionaries, among them Nick Nolte and Ed Harris, ostentatiously refused to applaud as the rest of the Academy gave the 89-year-old director

Mr. Teachout, the drama critic of the *Wall Street Journal* and the music critic of *Commentary*, blogs about the arts at www.TerryTeachout.com. He is writing a biography of Louis Armstrong.

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a long and heartfelt ovation on Oscar night.

Richard Schickel, *Time*'s film critic, was in the audience, having produced the brief film tribute with which Kazan was introduced. Now he has paid a more ambitious tribute to Elia Kazan, this time in the form of a full-length critical biography. It's not a tell-all gossipfest (though Schickel is candid about Kazan's philandering) but a thoughtful attempt to sum up the career of the only major American director to have worked simultaneously and successfully in both film and theater. Just as important, though, *Elia Kazan: A Biography* tells the unvarnished truth about Stalinism on Broadway and in Hollywood. I never thought I'd live to see a mainstream-media figure write such a book—but, then, I never thought I'd live to see the Berlin Wall smashed into a million chunks and sold off to souvenir hunters, either.

Though Kazan is now mainly remembered for his films, his work on Broadway was more significant. Not only was he the preferred director of Tennessee Williams (*Streetcar*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*) and Arthur Miller (*Death of a Salesman*, *All My Sons*), but he also staged such much-discussed plays as William Inge's *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, Archibald MacLeish's *J.B.*, Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth*, and Robert Anderson's *Tea and Sympathy*, all in a steam-heated style that Mary McCarthy summed up with her usual blend of cattiness and precision. Writes Schickel:

> McCarthy would describe the typical character of "the so-called American realist school" [of playwriting] as belonging "to the lower middle class sociologically, but biologically he is a member of some indeterminate lower order of primates" and call Kazan "the whip-cracking ringmaster of this school of brutes," staging plays full of "the sounds of furniture breaking, heavy breathing and, eventually, a sobbing confession of some sort of failure, possibly alcoholic or homosexual."

That style was shaped in the crucible of the Group Theatre, the left-wing producing collective that gave Kazan his start on Broadway in the Thirties. The Group Theatre sought to put Russian ideas about naturalism in acting on the New York stage (the performance style now known as "Method acting" originated there). But its members were no less interested in Russian ideas about politics, and the plays they produced were for the most part exemplary of the hard-left, lower-middlebrow populism that was the Communist party's chief contribution to American culture. It was during his Group Theatre days that Kazan became a Communist, breaking with the party when its officials ordered him to mount a takeover of the company. The experience turned him into a devout anti-Stalinist, though it had little effect on his underlying political and aesthetic convictions. Not only did Kazan remain a sentimental leftist, but his later work would be deeply informed by the Popular Front's art-for-the-people style of didactic realism, to which he added, first on Broadway and then in Hollywood, a degree of intensity so pronounced as to border on the operatic.

Not only did Kazan remain a sentimental leftist, but his later work would be deeply informed by the Popular Front's art-for-the-people style of didactic realism.

Though Schickel, who is old enough to have seen most of Kazan's postwar stage productions, devotes plenty of space to his Broadway career, he knows there is nothing so evanescent as the work of a stage director. "Movies, treated so contemptuously at the time by haughty Broadway, are different," he adds. "Because they are physical products, immutable reels of celluloid, they persist." Fortunately, Kazan was personally responsible for transferring *A Streetcar Named Desire* from stage to screen in 1951, leaving most of the Broadway cast intact (except for Jessica Tandy, the original Blanche DuBois, who was replaced by Vivien Leigh). Not only did the resulting film make Marlon Brando a star, but it gave later generations of theatergoers a sense of what Kazan had brought to Broadway. Superficially realistic in its portrayal of working-class New Orleans, *Streetcar* is in fact an exercise in high-voltage sexual romanticism with a gay twist—a tipsy mix of D. H. Lawrence and E. M. Forster—and though the director was as straight as a stick, he responded to Williams's overripe pseudo-poetry as eagerly as though he'd written it himself.

With one exception, the film version of *Streetcar* embodies all of Kazan. The only thing missing is his politics, and by then he was mere weeks away from passing through the refiner's fire of the HUAC hearings. After he fingered eight Group Theatre Communists in public testimony before the committee, a goodly number of his left-wing friends became ex-friends, an experience that scarred him for life. Even now, few liberals in the entertainment business are willing to speak frankly about the compelling reasons that serious-minded ex-Communists like Kazan chose to testify. Schickel, by contrast, gets it dead right: "The failure of the Communist left to own up to Stalin's crimes against humanity in a timely fashion was—let's put this as mildly as possible—illiberal behavior. The failure of much of the American left to acknowledge this fact is illiberal behavior. . . . Kazan, as well as others who shared his liberal beliefs yet testified cooperatively before HUAC, were generally right about the Communists."

Kazan's decision to become a "friendly" witness inspired *On the Waterfront* (1954), the story of Terry Malloy, a failed boxer turned big-city stevedore who becomes entangled in the murderous doings of his corrupt union bosses, then purges himself by becoming a government informer. Working in close collaboration with screenwriter Budd Schulberg, another ex-Communist who named names, and Brando (who gave the greatest performance of his life as Malloy, the shy, battered boy-man who "coulda been a contender"), Kazan turned this tough little tale into a *Streetcar*-like fusion of meticulously observed realism (nearly all of the film was shot on location in New York)

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and wildly extravagant romanticism (suitably accompanied by Leonard Bernstein's Copland-meets-Puccini score). Beautifully shot and impeccably cast, *On the Waterfront* was Kazan's cinematic apologia, and though conservatives are now inclined to overrate the film for political reasons, it nonetheless embodies much of what was characteristic about American art in the early Fifties.

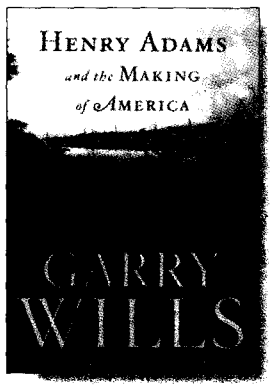
Certainly Kazan never made a stronger movie, in part because the prevailing winds in Hollywood, as Schickel explains, had already started to blow in a different direction. In order to compete with TV, Hollywood producers were increasingly opting for widescreen Technicolor extravaganzas that were "slower, dumber, less artistically and intellectually stirring than they had been." Though Kazan would try briefly to keep up with the de Milles, shooting *East of Eden* in color and CinemaScope with James Dean, his days as a Hollywood big shot were numbered, and he would spend his old age writing barely readable blockbuster novels, dying in 2003 at the age of 94.

Was he a great filmmaker? Though Kazan's verismo style has always seemed to me both overwrought and essentially false in its Popular Front–style glamorization of the proletariat, I find a few of his films, especially *On the Waterfront*, quite watchable. Most other critics, Schickel among them, rate him far more highly than that:

> Kazan's best films, I firmly believe, are far more effective [social] criticism (and much more enjoyable products) than any works that emanated from the more ideologically rigid Communist left, which, culturally speaking, remained irrelevant to the American "masses." There are moments in them that are, quite simply, touchstones of the modern conscience, constantly quoted, referred to, treasured by civilized people.

That's coming it a bit high, but Schickel himself deserves all the praise in the world for setting the record straight on Kazan's life as a Communist—and his afterlife as an ex-Communist. Alas, one doubts such scrupulous candor will serve either man well in Hollywood, where honesty has ever and always been the worst policy. **NR**

Nation Building



Henry Adams and the Making of America, by Garry Wills (Houghton Mifflin, 448 pp., $30)

ALGIS VALIUNAS

Of great American books, Henry Adams's *History of the United States of America During the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison* (1889–91) is almost certainly the least read. The book's sheer mass terrifies: Originally published in nine volumes, it runs to some 2,700 pages in the two-volume Library of America edition. One doesn't read a book this thick unless someone authoritative tells one to, and the authorities have long had little or no use for the *History*.

The Northwestern University historian and critic Garry Wills wants justice—and a readership—for Adams's book, which he reveres as "the non-fiction prose masterpiece of the nineteenth century in America." Not only Adams but also the young America he portrays, Wills contends, deserve their countrymen's highest esteem. Wills angrily flattens the distinguished historians—Richard Hofstadter, Henry Steele Commager, Merrill Peterson—who have made the *History* out to be Adams's scourging of "a low and vile period" in our national life. These eminenti, Wills argues, could have reached their dire conclusions only by reading the first six chapters of the first volume—which summarize the sad state of America's material, intellectual, and spiritual development in 1800, the year before Jefferson assumed office—and by ignoring the remaining 2,600 pages of the story. In Wills's view, Adams turns the exalted conception of his model, Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, upside down and inside out, as he happily chronicles "the rise of a democratic nation."

Democracy itself appeared a dubious proposition to many Americans at the beginning of the 19th century. The notorious animadversions attributed to Alexander Hamilton on popular sovereignty indicate the tone into which the dispute descended: "Your people, sir—your people is a great beast!" In response, Jefferson called such Federalists as Hamilton "incurables," as though their loathing for democracy were a wasting moral disease. Led by Hamilton, the Federalists, whose center of gravity lay in New England and New York, tended to favor English ways in politics, manners, literature; some even pined for a king of their own who would crush the democratic beast under his magnificent boot-heel. The Republicans, most of whose preeminent figures were Virginians, found their inspiration in the French Revolution and the Rights of Man, embracing a fundamentally egalitarian society, though under the sage direction of nature's own aristocrats—men such as Jefferson, Madison, James Monroe, and Albert Gallatin. Adams's *History* shows how an America riven by these competing Old World influences became a unified nation and a power commanding the respect of its fiercest and most potent rivals—none other than England and France.

America came by this respect the long way round. Jefferson wanted to make sure that the United States became precisely what England, France, and the other brawling thugs of Europe were not: peaceable, decent, homespun, unconcerned with the beguiling glitter of military glory. He preached, and tried to practice, a utopian cosmopolitanism with exemplary American righteousness as its foundation. As Adams writes, in a passage of central importance:

Mr. Valiunas is a literary journalist and the author of *Churchill's Military Histories*.

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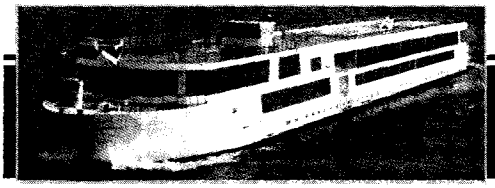
Sailing May 4 -13, 2006

Rhine River Charter

WITH MICHAEL NOVAK, CAL THOMAS, MONA CHAREN, JOHN O'NEILL, KATE O'BEIRNE, RICH LOWRY, JAY NORDLINGER, &



VISITING AMSTERDAM, DÜSSELDORF, COLOGNE, KOBLENZ, MAINZ, RÜDESHEIM, HEIDELBERG, MANNHEIM, STRASBOURG, AND BASEL

WE ARE PROUD to announce *National Review*'s next delightful adventure: our 2006 Rhine River Charter Cruise.

Featuring a line-up of all-star conservative speakers, and a glorious four-country Rhine River itinerary—Amsterdam in The Netherlands; Düsseldorf, Cologne, Koblenz, Rüdesheim, Mainz, Mannheim, and Gernsheim in Germany; Strasbourg in France; and Basel in Switzerland—this special trip (which includes two days "pre-cruise" in Amsterdam!) will take place May 4-13, 2006, aboard Viking River Cruises' new and luxurious 5-star *Helvetia II*.

You must join us for this thrilling charter trip—our *NR*-only contingent of congenial conservatives will enjoy a fabulous itinerary and inclusive excursions—a package that Viking River Cruises *specially* designed for us! We're certain this will be another intimate *NR* experience (the luxurious *Helvetia II*, which will launch in April, 2006, holds just 200 people) that you won't want to miss.

Joining us for all the unrivaled conservative revelry and discussion of major events, trends, and policies will be **Michael Novak**, the eminent scholar and author (the NRO Contributing Editor writes powerfully on theology, economics, and public policy); **John O'Neill**, the Vietnam War hero who founded "Swift Boat Veterans for Truth," which played a major role in the 2004 presidential elections, respected columnists and authors **Cal Thomas** and **Mona Charen**, and *NR* all-stars **Rich Lowry**, **Kate O'Beirne**, and **Jay Nordlinger.**

And ace political columnist **Robert Novak**—who's covered Washington intrigue for four decades—has just confirmed that he too will join us, guaranteeing that *NR*'s 18th(!) cruise will be second to none. The itinerary alone is worth the trip:

DAY/DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART	SPECIAL EVENT
Thur/May 4	Amsterdam	Arrive morning		Transfer to hotel
Fri/May 5	Amsterdam			Keukenhof/Aalsmeer flower auction tour
Sat/May 6	Amsterdam		6:30pm	Afternoon panel session Evening cocktail reception
Sun/May 7	Düsseldorf	11:00am	(overnight)	Morning panel session City tour/Benrath Palace
Mon/May 8	Düsseldorf		4:30am	
	Cologne	9:00am	10:00pm	City Walk/Cathedral and Brauhaus Tour Late-night Smoker
Tue/May 9	Koblenz	6:00am	2:00pm	Mosel Valley excursion Afternoon panel session Evening cocktail reception
	Rüdesheim	7:30pm	(overnight)	Late-evening wine tasting
Wed/May 10	Rüdesheim		6:00am	
	Mainz	8:30am	12:00 noon	Gutenberg museum and City walking tour
	Gernsheim	2:30pm (drop off)		Heidelberg excursion
	Mannheim	6:00pm	(overnight)	
Thur/May 11	Mannheim		2:00am	Morning panel session
	Strasbourg	2:00pm	(overnight)	City tour Late-night smoker
Fri/May 12	Strasbourg		1:00pm	Alsace/Vosges excursion Afternoon panel session Evening cocktail party
Sat/May 13	Basel	12:00 midnight (arrive)		

This 800-year-old city is renowned for its magnificent museums, colorful gardens, glorious architecture, and endless lattice of canals. During our pre-cruise stay, we'll enjoy a special tour of the famous Keukenhof/Aalsmeer flower auction.

This major arts center, home to numerous theaters, museums, and the German Opera House, is also a shopper's paradise (the Königsallee features many classy shops and pavement cafés). Our guided city tour will include a visit to Benrath Palace, with its stunning rococo interior and massive, beautiful gardens.

An intriguing mix of old and new, Cologne's Roman heritage is evident from the city's layout and many ancient ruins. Its modern plazas and the Hohe-Strasse, a pedestrian-only retail zone, provide ample shopping, lively bars and enticing restaurants. On our city tour, we'll visit the city's famous 14th century gothic Dom Cathedral (as well as a "Brauhaus" visit!).

Capturing traditional German charm, this city of cobblestone streets, ancient market squares, and medieval churches is home to the Ehrenbreitstein (Europe's oldest fortress). From here we'll be taking an exciting, extended, and guided tour of the Mosel Valley!

This lovely city is the chief

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on Viking River Cruises' new *Helvetia II*

Cruise

FREE TWO-DAY PRE-CRUISE STAY IN HISTORIC AMSTERDAM!

center of the Rhine wine industry. Its famed Drosselgasse, a tavern-lined, cobblestone street, attracts locals and visitors alike. Half-timbered medieval houses, narrow streets, and old inns give the town the flavor of the Middle Ages.

This ancient Roman city and important Middle Ages' trade center is famous as the home to printing pioneer Johannes Gutenberg. *NR*'s contingent will be visiting the Gutenberg Museum, as part of a City Walking tour. St. Stephen's Cathedral, which features Chagall's glorious stained-glass windows, is a must-see!

From this charming port we'll take an *NR* group tour to Heidelberg, famous for its esteemed university, charming Old Town, and awesome castle.

Renowned for its classical "chessboard" layout dating from the 17th century, Mannheim—featuring many elegant shops, cafés, and restaurants—is a haven for culture and the arts. You'll find the baroque Mannheim Residence, with its ornamental stucco knights' hall, of special interest.

This delightful border city exhibits both French and German influences. The old streets of "Petit France"—we'll saunter down them on the *NR* guided City Walk tour—with wooden houses and picturesque canals seem to make time stand still. We'll stay in this very special place overnight, with our second "day" featuring an NR excursion to delightful Alsace and Vosges.

Our last port is located at the point where French, German and Swiss borders meet, historic Basel, with cobblestone streets, 18th century buildings and three surviving medieval gates, is the gateway to the Swiss Rhineland.

That phenomenal cruise will be made all the better by the many "extras" that are part of an *NR* experience: ***The National Review 2006 Rhine River Charter Cruise*** will feature six seminar sessions (each two hours!) where our guest speakers and editors candidly discuss today's most important issues; three classy cocktail receptions and two delightful "smokers" featuring cigars (picture yourself on the Sun Deck, a delightful drink in hand, surrounded by new-found friends, as the luxurious *Helvetia II* gently sails past the most charming villages and vistas you will ever see, in the company of friends old and new!); plus intimate dining on two nights with our editors and guest speakers!

It's the trip of a lifetime—that's why 40 cabins (nearly half our available rooms!) are already booked. Don't miss out: Sign up today—call 1-800-707-1634 for a reservation kit, or get complete information (and sign up) right now at **www.nrcruise.com.**

Experience the trip of a lifetime: Join us in May—with Michael Novak, Robert Novak, Cal Thomas, Mona Charen, John O'Neill, Rich Lowry, Kate O'Beirne, and Jay Nordlinger—on the ***National Review 2006 Rhine River Charter Cruise.***

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DELUXE SUITE

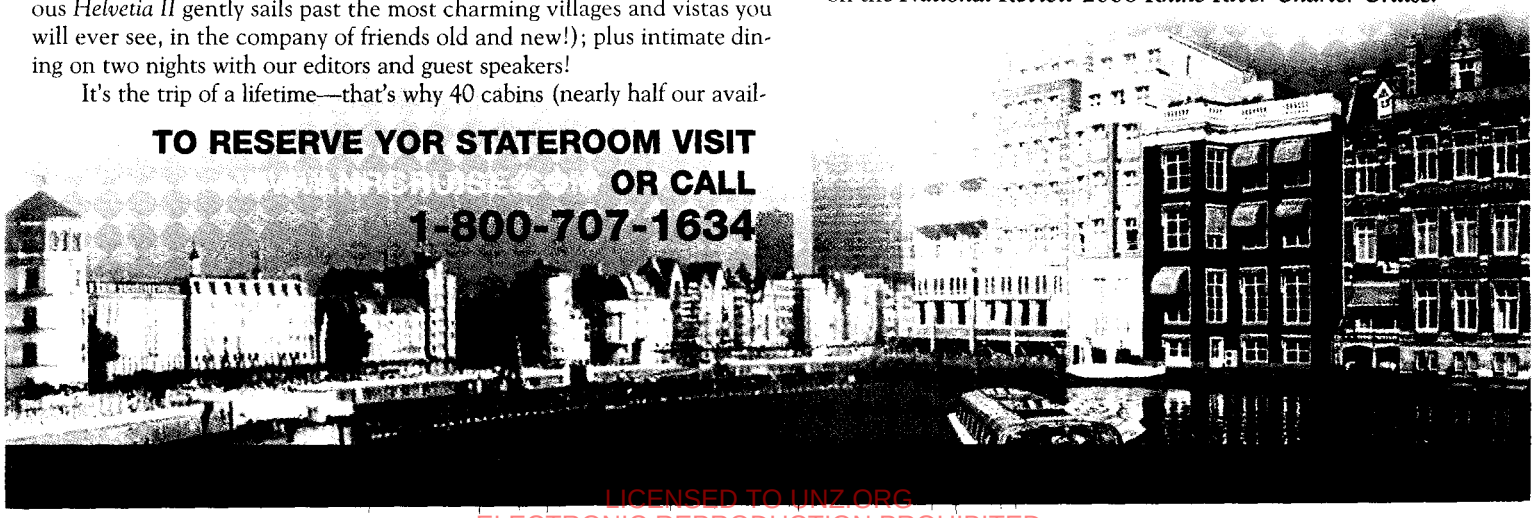
All staterooms on the beautiful new *Helvetia II* are a comfortable 155 square feet, and include a private bathroom and shower, TV, safe, hairdryer, air-conditioning, and come with a variety of window selections:

CATEGORY A French WIndows which open to small exterior river view landing, allowing you to stand outside and enjoy the lovely scenery (Upper Deck).

CATEGORY B Large wIndow with river view opens to let in fresh breezes and magnificent vistas (Middle Deck).

CATEGORY D Small wIndows with river view (Main Deck).

TO RESERVE YOR STATEROOM VISIT WWW.NRCRUISE.COM OR CALL 1-800-707-1634



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> Few men have dared to legislate as though eternal peace were at hand, in a world torn by wars and convulsions and drowned in blood; but this was what Jefferson aspired to do. Even in such dangers, he believed that Americans might safely set an example which the Christian world should be led by interest to respect and at length to imitate. As he conceived a true American policy, war was a blunder, an unnecessary risk; and even in case of robbery and aggression the United States, he believed, had only to stand on the defensive in order to obtain justice in the end. He would not consent to build up a new nationality merely to create more navies and armies, to perpetuate the crimes and follies of Europe; the central government at Washington should not be permitted to indulge in the miserable ambitions that had made the Old World a hell, and frustrated the hopes of humanity.

As Jefferson wanted malevolent Europe to leave America alone, so he wanted the national government to leave the state governments alone. Indeed, the more everyone left everyone else alone, the better for all concerned: "Cities, manufactures, mines, shipping, and accumulation of capital led, in his opinion, to corruption and tyranny." Virtue resided in the simple life of the yeoman farmer, idyllically self-contained.

Subsequent events reveal Adams's apparently innocent summary of Jefferson's high-minded ambitions to be discreetly but unmistakably mordant. The *History* provides the long answer to the question, How ridiculous can you be and not get eaten alive? For although Jefferson and his protégé Madison were among the presiding geniuses of the American Founding, incapacity and folly marked their presidencies.

That the American presidents had to reckon with the presiding genius of the age, Napoleon, rendered their sputtering haplessness all the more pitiable. Wills is perfectly right to say that Jefferson and Napoleon, not Jefferson and Madison, are the leading figures in Adams's history. Napoleon's diplomatic sleight-of-hand dazzled and confounded Jefferson and Madison, while the threat of overwhelming French military force cowed them. Even the foremost American coup of that time, the Louisiana Purchase, was really Napoleon's doing rather than Jefferson's; hunting down a motive for this inexplicable Napoleonic concession, Adams concludes that Napoleon was sick of the New World and wanted to be shut of it.

American military puniness meant that American faces were perennially red and raw from wiping off French and English spittle. Nothing excited English contempt, Adams writes, more than "Jefferson's passion for peace." Eventually American indignation and self-disgust propelled the young nation into war against England. Yet as much as Americans wanted and needed the War of 1812, they were by no means ready for it. The army was undermanned and ill-equipped. Fecklessness trickled down the chain of command. Blunderers and chuckleheads backed our army into debacle after catastrophe. Every disgraced military and political man blamed someone else for his own failures. The capital was torched as Madison fled.

Even heroism came within a hair's breadth of ruin. Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, the ranking naval hero of the war, won the Battle of Lake Erie only after a colleague's careless maneuver all but lost it. Gen. Andrew Jackson won the Battle of New Orleans, and thereby saved the United States, only after a thoughtless oversight of his own nearly sealed his defeat.

Wills chuckles his way through the storm because he knows the skies will be blue in the end. Leaning far too heavily on Adams's remark in a letter that "T. J. is a case for Beaumarchais, he needs the lightest of touches," Wills characterizes the *History* as "mainly a comedy in the Beaumarchais vein," or "a comedy of errors." To reach that conclusion, it helps to be tone-deaf and selectively blind.

About an episode of fruitless diplomacy, Wills writes, "Adams sees a sadly comic side to Monroe's travail, rejected in court after court, like a silent-movie actor who opens a series of doors and gets a pie in the face every time." What larks; but then Wills makes the mistake of quoting the passage he has just grossly misrepresented: "During a century of American diplomatic history, a minister of the United States has seldom if ever within six months suffered, at two great courts [French and Spanish], such contemptuous treatment as had then fallen to Monroe's lot . . . and he could no longer avoid another defeat [in England] more serious, and even more public, than the two which had already disturbed his temper." (Wills's ellipsis and brackets.) This is galling humiliation with dangerous consequences. Jeffersonian America is easy pickings for a world of predators, and Adams isn't smiling.

The *History*, unlike Beaumarchais but very like the operatic masterpiece that Mozart carved from Beaumarchais's cavalier flummery, is instinct with the sense of tragedy barely averted. Wills tries to make the case that Adams and the Tolstoy of *War and Peace* share a faith, inimical to the tragic sense of life, in the radiant future—a future toward which Providence is leading Tolstoy's Russia, and the innate wisdom of the people, served by its leaders, is guiding America. But in fact Adams, unlike Tolstoy, is ever aware that matters could have turned out otherwise, and he is relieved rather than crowing. The imprudence of some of the greatest men America has ever produced almost destroyed the youthful nation.

And as for the people's innate wisdom, here is what Adams says toward the end of the *History*, in the chapter on American character in 1817, which Wills considers the definitive testimonial to America's emerging greatness: "That the individual should rise to a higher order either of intelligence or morality than had existed in former ages was not to be expected, for the United States offered less field for the development of individuality than had been offered by older and smaller societies. The chief function of the American Union was to raise the average standard of intelligence and well-being . . . but much doubt remained whether the intelligence belonged to a high order, or proved a high morality. . . . Time alone would decide whether it would result in a high or a low national ideal." Time has not yet decided.

Wills fails even to recognize the supreme question that Adams's history leaves portentously in the air: How great can a democratic nation be without men of great prudence to lead it? For it is not folk wisdom and popular virtue that Adams shows supreme in this world. It is chance—dumb luck—which might just as easily have run the other way, because the best men lacked the force of mind to command it. **NR**

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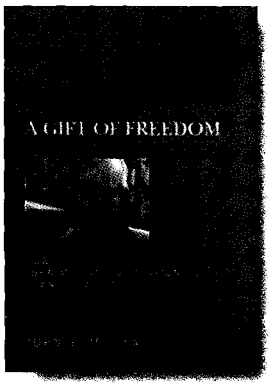
Mother's Milk



A Gift of Freedom: How the John M. Olin Foundation Changed America, by John J. Miller (Encounter, 232 pp., $25.95)

LEE EDWARDS

THERE are two groups of people who should read NATIONAL REVIEW political reporter John J. Miller's crisply written, authoritative history of the John M. Olin Foundation: conservatives wishing to reflect happily on some of the major intellectual accomplishments of the conservative movement over recent decades, and liberals desperately seeking to duplicate conservatives' success.

No conservative foundation in America received a greater return on its investment in the right ideas, and in the right men and women capable of advancing them, than the John M. Olin Foundation. It devoted about $68 million to the crucial study of how laws influence economic behavior; one recipient of its support was Ronald Coase, the 1991 Nobel Prize winner in economics, who remarked that without the foundation's help "it is doubtful whether the importance of my work would have been recognized."

The foundation also supported conservative college newspapers—starting with a student publication at the University of Chicago in 1980 and developing into the nationwide Collegiate Network, which has nearly 100 publications, including some on the country's most prestigious campuses. But Miller suggests that the single most important grant in the foundation's history was its support of a 1982 conference of law students and professors that was "the springboard for the creation of the Federalist Society," which has played an essential role in altering the nation's legal culture from the university to the Supreme Court.

One of the most spirited debates of the post–Cold War era occurred between Francis Fukuyama, who argued in his lecture "The End of History?" that democracy and free enterprise had triumphed, and Samuel Huntington, who countered in his book *The Clash of Civilizations* that most of the Muslim world had so far resisted democracy, and that China's expansionism showed that Communism itself might not be dead. Fukuyama delivered his "End of History" lecture at the John M. Olin Center at the University of Chicago, and then published it in *The National Interest*, a journal underwritten by the foundation; Huntington led the John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard.

This was part of a pattern: The foundation displayed a remarkable ability to identify conservative intellectuals with paradigmatic ideas. Among others who benefited from Olin largesse were Charles Murray, author of the landmark study on welfare, *Losing Ground*; John E. Chubb and Terry M. Moe, authors of the pioneering work on school choice, *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools*; Dinesh D'Souza, with his groundbreaking best-seller, *Illiberal Education*; and—perhaps most famously—Allan Bloom, whose *Closing of the American Mind* sold more than a million copies.

Bloom was able to write his book on "how higher education has failed democracy and impoverished the souls of today's students" because he was the co-director of the John M. Olin Center for Inquiry into the Theory and Practice of Democracy, which had received more than $9 million from the foundation.

The keys to the foundation's extraordinary success, Miller writes, were its dedicated officers and directors; its fidelity to John M. Olin's philosophy of free enterprise, limited government, and individual freedom; and its willingness to spend the principal as well as the interest of its money to create a conservative counter-intelligentsia of scholars, think tanks, and publications.

Undergirding the foundation's activities was the entrepreneurial spirit of Olin, who built one of America's great corporate empires and then devoted the last years of his life to determining how best to give away the fortune he had accumulated. His most controversial request was that his foundation not outlive him by more than a generation. His reasoning was that "enemies of free enterprise" might seize control of the foundation's assets and use them against the original objective. (This is in fact what happened to the John D. MacArthur Foundation, and other grant-giving institutions too numerous to mention.) He felt strongly that the intellectual defense of capitalism, in Miller's words,

Mr. Edwards is a fellow of the Heritage Foundation, and his many books include histories of that institution and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute.

THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS

They look to tired critics like mere busts
In galleries, but wittingly collected,
By bold anachronism resurrected,
This flesh so warm a skeptic almost trusts
The felt, unliteral fidelity
That framed them under sky and vaulting roof:
The red-cloaked Heracleitus still aloof,
Parmenides still pondering "to be,"
Young Aristotle marking out this world,
Old Plato pointing upward to the forms.
Behind them rise dear clouds, heartbreaking storms,
Lightning that Zeus and gray Jehovah hurled,
And from a corner, winkingly alive,
The face of Raphael at twenty-five.

—ANTHONY LOMBARDY

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"needed all the help it could get as soon as it could get it"; as a result, although the foundation's assets never rose above $117 million, it disbursed funds at an annual rate attained only by foundations five times as large.

Almost as important a figure in the foundation's success was former Treasury secretary William E. Simon, who was its president from 1977 until his death in 2000. Simon had three exemplary executive directors—Frank O'Connell, Michael Joyce, and James Piereson, who presided over the closing of the foundation in 2005. These men and their small but efficient staff turned the foundation into what Miller calls "a venture capital fund for the conservative movement," reinvesting constantly in recipients who were successful. Olin was patient, understanding that it can take a long time for even the best of ideas to have consequences. It worked closely with about a dozen other conservative foundations, leveraging grants to counter effectively the liberal foundations that often outspent conservatives by 10 to 1.

I can personally attest that writing an institutional history like *The Gift of Freedom* is not easy. There are questions of access to confidential documents, editorial independence, judgments about those still living. There is the temptation to offer only the thinnest of narratives and simply provide long lists of laudable accomplishments and worthy individuals. Miller has resisted the temptation, crafting a highly readable and honest portrayal of the foundation and its people. He does not gloss over Bill Simon's "ferocious temper" or the foundation's favoring of neoconservatives over paleos. (It was not, however, a captive of the neos, as some paleos have charged; it gave generous help to such traditional conservatives as William F. Buckley Jr. and Robert P. George, and organizations including the Heritage Foundation and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute.)

John J. Miller's admirable and concise study demonstrates that the assessment of Nathan Tarcov, of the Olin Center at the University of Chicago, was correct: "Future generations will look back at the history of our time with profound gratitude that the John M. Olin Foundation was here so long and knew so well how to get it right." **NR**

House of War

The Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims, edited by Andrew G. Bostom (Prometheus, 759 pp., $28)

J. PETER PHAM

HISTORIAN Robert Conquest recently pondered why so many of his fellow scholars had been for so long incapable of grasping the true nature of the Soviet regime. He concluded by blaming "a clerisy that has hardly heard of opinions other than those appearing to be . . . the acceptable expression of concern for humanity" and that has demonstrated "a strong tendency to silence those who disagree with one or another of the accepted beliefs."

As the fourth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks came and went, it was difficult not to experience a sense of déjà vu. The failure of Western elites to acknowledge the totalitarian terror of the 20th century is eerily similar to their current failure to confront the Islamic totalitarian movements of the 21st. The same historical forces—and, in some cases, the very same individuals—are at work, not only trivializing accounts of the existential threat, but also legitimizing the enemy as political actors with rational grievances with whom one can treat on the basis of some ever-elusive common ground while condemning skeptics to political and academic obloquy.

Against this depressing backdrop, two welcome developments have recently taken place. The first was the acknowledgement by President Bush, in an October speech to the National Endowment for Democracy, that America is engaged in a struggle not only against terrorism the tactic, but also against the specific ideology that has inspired the most virulent manifestations of terrorism. "Some call this evil Islamic radicalism; others, militant Jihadism; still others Islamofascism," Bush said—and noted that this ideology is "very different from" Islam and, in fact, "exploits" it.

The second development is the publication of the new book *The Legacy of Jihad*, an impressive compendium that meticulously documents the terror that is jihad—using historical and contemporary Muslim theological and juridical texts, as well as the accounts of some of the most eminent Muslim and non-Muslim scholars of Islam in the days before political correctness squelched academic freedom.

The 750-page tome is by no means an easy read. It is a maze of primary texts and secondary studies, barely held together by the editor's lengthy but useful introduction. Perseverance, however, is rewarded: The wide-ranging anthology—including commentaries by representatives of Shiite as well as all four schools of Sunni jurisprudence, historical accounts of regional jihad campaigns, and analyses of current conflicts—takes the reader from the religious roots of the jihad ideology to the havoc that it has wrought across the continents of Asia, Africa, Europe, and, now, America.

Scholars of Islam will undoubtedly have criticisms, some of which may be justified. After all, the book's editor, Andrew G. Bostom, is not an academic specialist in Islam: He is a clinical epidemiologist on the faculty of Brown Medical School. But not being a card-carrying member of the contemporary

Mr. Pham is director of the Nelson Institute for International and Public Affairs at James Madison University and an academic fellow at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies.

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academic fraternity of Middle East scholars gives Bostom the distinct advantage of being exempt from the shackles with which the field's regnant orthodoxies hobble many of his would-be competitors. Unburdened by the constraints of political correctness, Bostom provides an unparalleled documentary history of nearly 14 centuries of jihad, and of the non-Muslims who have been subjugated as a result of that relentless campaign. His account is a somber warning of the mortal challenge posed to free societies by the ongoing jihad of the militants.

Scholars as well as general readers owe a debt of gratitude to Bostom for making available a number of very important texts—including, for the first time in English, the commentaries on the Koran's ninth sura (*the* text on jihad) by al-Baydawi, al-Suyuti, al-Zamakhshari, al-Tabari, and al-Ghazali. But he won't be receiving many congratulatory messages from academia, which will feel the sting of the evidence he adduces against some of its cherished shibboleths—including what Bernard Lewis has called "the myth" of a "Golden Age of equal rights" in Islamic-ruled Spain.

Muslim scholars like UCLA law professor Khaled Abou El Fadl, author of a widely quoted post-9/11 text on moderate Islam, may be right that "Islamic tradition does not have a notion of holy war" and that jihad "simply means to strive hard or struggle in the pursuit of a just cause" (although Bostom unearths a 1999 article in which the same El Fadl asserted the contrary). And Koranic passages like the ninth sura may be misinterpreted by radicals. In time, perhaps, voices of reason within the Muslim community may prevail. For now, however, the widespread support that the terrorists have enjoyed throughout the Muslim world suggests that their jihad ideology represents a current that is not that far out of the historical mainstream. In any event, the logic of terrorism requires only a fanatical few to unleash destruction on the many.

If it is the destiny of the contemporary West to be tested in the forge of unrelenting jihadist warfare, then its defenders would do well to be armed with an understanding of the ideology that motivates its foes. *The Legacy of Jihad* is a very good place to start. **NR**

■ MUSIC ■

Wild About Earl

JAY NORDLINGER

LAST month, Earl Wild celebrated his 90th birthday, with a recital in Carnegie Hall. Who's Earl Wild? He is one of the outstanding piano virtuosos of the 20th century. A lanky Pittsburgher, with huge hands, Wild has a monster technique, capable of anything. He has always played the hardest music, the showiest music—but he is more than a technician. Wild has an interesting musical head. He is a throwback to an earlier time of unabashed Romanticism, and barnstorming pianism.

Born two years before America entered the First War, Wild studied with one of the great piano pedagogues of the age, Egon Petri, who in turn had been a student of Busoni. To review Wild's biography is to touch history. He played with Mischa Elman, a violinist who now seems almost as distant as Paganini. He played in the NBC Orchestra under Toscanini. He pioneered Gershwin, that whippersnapper from Tin Pan Alley. He worked on television with Sid Caesar. Some people, with a wrong idea of sophistication, have sniffed at Wild, for this varied background (not to mention his old-fashioned repertoire). Wild has let them sniff: He has had a fun and fulfilling career.

That career has included composing, because, when Wild was young, there was no great division between composer and performer: They were often the same person. He has specialized in transcriptions—in arrangements for the piano—like so many other virtuosos of his kind. Among those transcriptions is an album of Gershwin songs. A friend of mine recently remarked to Wild, "I'm going to learn your 'Liza.'" He responded, "It's hard, you know." Indeed.

Five years ago, I attended, and reviewed, Wild's 85th-birthday recital, also in Carnegie Hall. One had to make few allowances, if any. I reviewed him essentially straight, as I would a pianist of 45, say. A reader—a woman from Ohio, I think—wrote me an angry letter, saying, "How can you say those critical things about this great and venerable musician?" I replied that I was paying him the compliment of regarding him as I always had: He was himself.

And he has continued to be himself. Forget the recordings—there have been several recent ones—because they can be deceptive. (Recording engineers have more tricks than fashion photographers.) What about live performances? Two years ago, Wild traveled to Carnegie Hall to play in the memorial service for Harold C. Schonberg, the longtime critic of the *New York Times*. Schonberg loved pianists—particularly Romantic virtuosos like Wild—and, in fact, wrote a classic book called *The Great Pianists*. At the memorial service, Wild played a Liszt ballade, and played it well, as always.

Music history is replete with masterly older pianists. Artur Rubinstein played inspiringly in his 80s and 90s, enjoying what someone dubbed his "Indian summer." Shura Cherkassky had a kind of renaissance in his 80s, or at least a new fame. Mieczyslaw Horszowski was concertizing—and well—at almost 100. And among non-pianists, we could cite the cellist Pablo Casals, a force in his 90s, and the guitarist Andrés Segovia (ditto). Leopold Stokowski, the conductor, is a special case: He conducted compellingly right up to his death at 95.

And Earl Wild is not the only musician to have celebrated his 90th birthday at Carnegie Hall recently. A week after Wild appeared, the hall staged a 90th-birthday concert for the composer George Perle. And he is practically a pup compared to Elliott Carter, born in 1908, who has been seen in Carnegie Hall and elsewhere a lot

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this season. Taking the cake, however, is Leo Ornstein, the visionary composer who lived from 1892 to 2002. (Digest those numbers for a minute.) At the Wild recital, the music scholar David Dubal remarked to me that Ornstein is the only composer to have worked in three different centuries.

Tuck that into your cocktail-party repertoire.

Arriving at Carnegie Hall last month, Wild was not in his best shape physically. He had had a heart operation, among others, and his vision was poor. But he looked essentially as he always has, so tall, so erect, so elegant, with that shock of white hair. I asked a member of his management team something embarrassingly gossipy: "Is that a toupée?" No, that's Wild's hair, every follicle, and there are tons of them.

He does not play old man's recitals, this pianist: not gentle Schumann pieces, or Chopin mazurkas, or the Ravel *Pavane*. His recitals are still Wildean. He began with something relatively calm, however, a recent transcription of his: an Adagio by Marcello (of the Italian Baroque). In this piece, Wild was beautifully in balance, demonstrating a singing tone and bringing out all voices. He played freely—with ample pedal, for example—but not without taste. He suffered a slight memory lapse—he had had some in his 85th-birthday recital, too—but quickly recovered from it. A relaxed, almost nonchalant man, he has never been one to sweat the small stuff.

After Marcello came Beethoven: his Sonata in D major, Op. 10, No. 3. This is a difficult work, sometimes fiendishly so. Wild was not a model of Beethoven playing here, but he exhibited a certain command, and he gave the final movement—the Rondo—notable character.

Then—you must have this in a Wild recital—Liszt. And not introspective, technically undemanding Liszt, either, but the *Jeux d'eau à la Villa d'Este*. With those relaxed arms, sweeping over the keyboard, Wild produced sparkling effects. I had the thought that, not long before, I'd heard the Hungarian pianist Zoltán Kocsis—now in his prime—play this same work. Was he better than Wild? Sure, but not by much, I tell you, not by much.

The recitalist then turned to Chopin, his G-minor Ballade, and as he played, I had another thought: The objections I had to this performance were those I had always had to Wild's playing. (Briefly, I find him a little blunt.) My objections had nothing to do with age, with a decline either technical or interpretive.

And there was a lot to admire in Wild's playing of the Ballade, as there was in his playing of subsequent Chopin works. One of them was the Scherzo in B-flat minor. Wild does not play with the same fire or force he once did, but he compensates for it in what you might call poetry. The Scherzo didn't sound much like a scherzo, frankly—it sounded more like a nocturne. But you have never heard it so beautiful! You perhaps never knew there was such beauty in it. An autumnal, ruminative Scherzo in B-flat minor? Turns out it's possible.

Wild also played Chopin's Fantaisie-Impromptu (from which we get the pop song "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows"). In these hands, it was amazingly nimble, gossamer.

To end the printed program we had another recent Wild transcription—this one a flashy one (none of this stately Baroque stuff). The piece? The *Mexican Hat Dance*. I kid you not. Wild put on a circus act, dazzling, irresistible. Toward the beginning, he had a little lapse, didn't care, and started over again—finishing superbly.

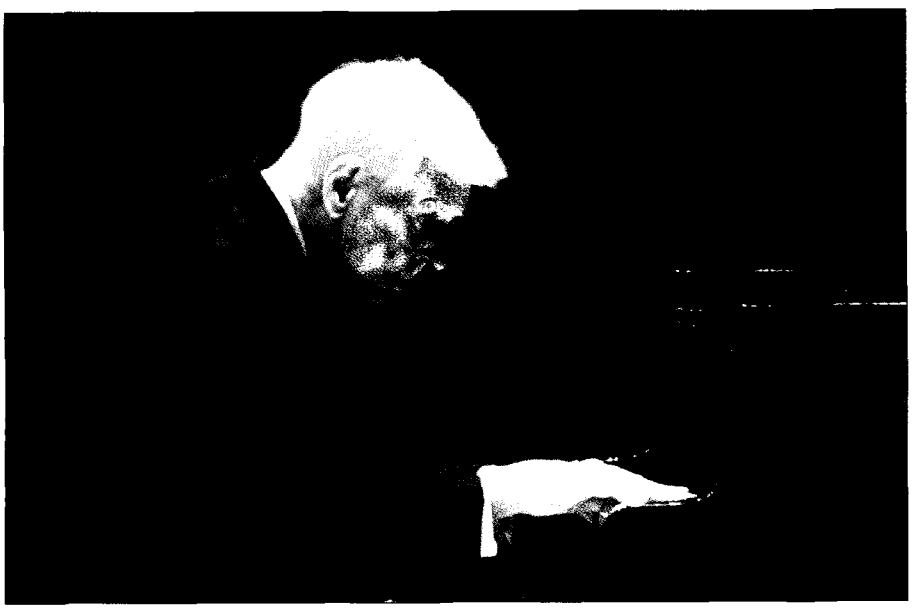
As the audience stood and applauded, something a bit strange occurred: The soprano Aprile Millo—another old-fashioned musician, as it happens—appeared on the stage, with the composer Ned Rorem (spry and randy at 82). Millo gave a little talk, in her grand-diva way, commenting that Wild has "the ocean in his hands" (which is true). It seemed that she would sing "Happy Birthday"—but, sadly, she merely started the audience in it, while Rorem played the piano.

And then Wild gave a single encore: not another dazzler, but a piece dazzling in a different way: Respighi's *Notturno*. This was dreamy, beguiling, almost impossibly lovely. Who would ever have thought that Earl Wild—thunderer of the piano, heir to the Liszt tradition, to the Busoni tradition—would end his career as an exquisite colorist?

But I should not be so quick to say he is ending his career. I wouldn't be surprised to cover his 95th-birthday recital, in November 2010. Many people have said that he's the last of a line, the last of a breed—"the last Romantic." But people are always saying that, about this one or that one. If you counted up the Last Romantics in recent decades, you might reach 20. There was even a Horowitz documentary of that title: *The Last Romantic*. Right now, I could name you ten young pianists who are virtuoso Romantics (most of them from Russia, to be sure—mother of that breed). But Wild is something special, an American original, and when he is gone, why . . .

But there will be many, many recordings. He made his first recording in 1934. He made his most recent last year—i.e., 70 years later.

Pretty good. **NR**



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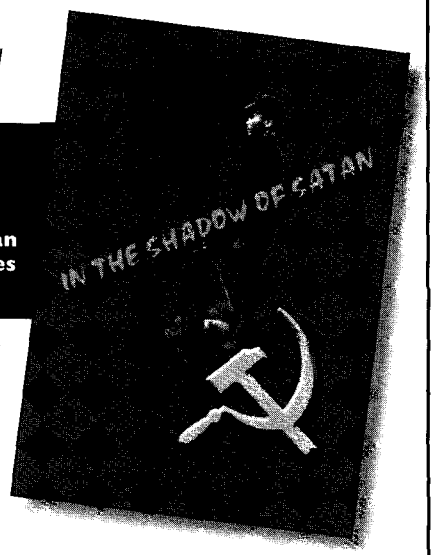

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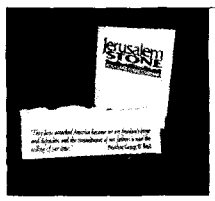

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Christians Afoot

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 25

I AM mindful that Samuel Johnson enjoined the preachers of his time not to inveigh against those who were absent from church on Sundays by scolding those who were not absent. Notwithstanding Dr. Johnson's stricture, I here berate those who fail to heed the atrocities in China and North Korea, by appealing to those who have heeded these barbarisms, drawing attention to the inattention that the Christian world seems to be paying them.

Meghan Clyne of the *New York Sun* cites a report on North Korea compiled by David Hawk, the author of *Hidden Gulag: Exposing North Korea's Prison Camps*. Hawk and his South Korean researchers obtained dozens of eyewitness accounts of persecutions of Christians.

Michael Cromartie, chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, which issued Hawk's report, "called on Mr. Bush to include the specific findings of the North Korean report in his diplomatic discussions with Chinese and South Korean officials . . . and to urge leaders of both Asian nations to take a firmer stand against their communist neighbor."

The report tells, among many other accounts, of a woman in her 20s who was washing clothes in a river. A fellow washerwoman saw a Bible fall out of her basket and reported her to the authorities. She was executed by firing squad.

That martyr got off lightly. Nine years ago in South Pyongan province, a unit of the North Korean army was assigned the job of widening a highway. Demolition of a house standing in the way revealed a hidden Bible and a list of 25 names: a Christian pastor, two assistant pastors, two elders, and 20 parishioners. The 25 were all brought to the road construction site, where spectators had been gathered. The parishioners were grouped off to one side while the pastor, the assistant pastors, and the elders were made to lie down in front of a steamroller. As if following a script written in early Roman history, they were told they could escape death by denying their faith and pledging to serve Dear Leader Kim Jong Il. They chose death. Ms. Clyne quotes Hawk's report: "Some of the parishioners . . . cried, screamed out, or fainted when the skulls made a popping sound as they were crushed beneath the steamroller."

Anti-Christian activity is not as rabid in China, but it is everywhere evident, and it has not been noticeably reduced by recent rumors that the Vatican may withdraw the papal nuncio from Taipei and move him to Beijing. The Vatican has so far persisted in recognizing the state of Taiwan, which is something most other diplomatic entities shrink from doing.

The Vatican's desire for diplomatic relations with Beijing makes almost difficult any remonstrance over Chinese treatment of Catholics, though such is being attempted, as when the Italian newsweekly *L'Espresso* published an article based on an interview with two Chinese priests. The article had not identified the priests, but authorities interrogated the reporter's interpreter to learn their names. The priests have since been arrested.

China is officially atheist, and such Christianity as is vestigially permitted is doctrinally emasculated. (Christ did not rise from the dead; his mother was not a virgin.) Worship is allowed, according to one AP dispatch, "only in government-controlled churches, which recognize the pope as a spiritual leader but appoint their own priests and bishops. Catholic Chinese who meet outside sanctioned churches are frequently harassed, fined, and sometimes sent to labor camps." The government's Catholic Church claims 34 million believers while the unofficial church of Chinese loyal to Rome has 12 million followers.

How ought western diplomats to have treated Nazi officials in pre-war Germany? There is enduring speculation on that subject, but none, we'd guess, that argues that to ignore religious persecution is one acceptable way to confront it.

Iraq: The Last Word

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 29

THE mills have been grinding feverishly in the matter of Iraq. They have, for the most part, dealt with questions having to do with our entering the war, but these have led to promptings of different kinds on how to get away from Iraq. Prof. Jeffrey Hart of Dartmouth has amassed a near-encyclopedic document giving instances of what he deems dissimulations by the administration and its supporters in calling for war on Iraq. Norman Podhoretz defends the administration thoroughly in *Commentary*. Frank Rich of the *New York Times* scathes up his weekly scorn, he is answered by the *New York Sun*, and Michael Kinsley appears in *Slate*, the online magazine he founded, exercising his airborne syllogisms in telling us what to do.

Here is my reading on the Iraq question.

—The principals, Democrats and Republicans, believed that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, some ready to fire, others being developed.

Here is a brief item in *Time* magazine dated July 7, 2003, three months after we conquered Baghdad: "Meeting last month at a sweltering U.S. base outside Doha, Qatar, with his top Iraq commanders, President Bush skipped quickly past the niceties and went straight to his chief political obsession: Where are the weapons of mass destruction? Turning to his Baghdad proconsul, Paul Bremer, Bush asked, 'Are you in charge of finding WMD?' Bremer said no, he was not. Bush then put the same question to his military commander, Gen. Tommy Franks. But Franks said it wasn't his job either. A little exasperated, Bush asked, So who is in charge of finding WMD?" That is not how someone who was less than certain that they were there somewhere would have deported himself.

—In fact, the weapons of mass destruction were not there. Many public statements by the president and vice president and others have been influenced by the absence of the WMD.

What is happening is a conscious, and even conceivably unconscious, effort to distract attention from ignoble failures of

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the intelligence community. If one's handling of the history of the pre-war years is animated by a desire to justify the military course that was taken, one can maneuver words in such a way as to argue that the weapons had every reason to be there. We knew, after all, that they had existed as a part of the Saddam armory and that they had been used ten times. President Bush suggested that Iraq's purportedly successful nuclear program was now searching for uranium, implying that it was operational, even though, after thorough investigation, the International Atomic Energy Agency reported it inoperative as of 1998.

—Looking ahead, Michael Kinsley (who was opposed to the war) reminds us that "thousands of Americans died in Vietnam after America's citizens and government were in general agreement that the war was a mistake. We are now very close to that point of general agreement in the Iraq war. Do you believe that if Bush, Cheney, and company could turn back the clock, they would do this again? And now, thanks to Rep. John Murtha, it is permissible to say, or at least to ask, 'Why not just get out now? Or at least soon, on a fixed schedule?' There are arguments against this—some good, some bad—but the worst is the one delivered by Cheney and others with their most withering scorn. It is the argument that it is wrong to tell American soldiers risking their lives in a foreign desert that they are fighting for a mistake.

"One strength of this argument is that it doesn't require defending the war itself. The logic applies equally whether the war is justified or not. Another strength is that the argument is true, in a way: It is a terrible thing to tell someone he or she is risking death in a mistaken cause. But it is more terrible actually to die in that mistaken cause."

Kinsley ends by divulging some thinking in the Pentagon which he might have divined using nothing more than his agile brain: that the longer the war goes on, the more people will die. "That is worth keeping in mind while you try to decide whether American credibility or Iraqi prosperity or Middle East stability can justify the cost in blood and treasure. And don't forget to factor in the likelihood that the war will actually produce these fine things." We are now very close to that point of general agreement in the Iraq war.

Murrow vs. McCarthy

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 6

HERE is a coincidence of extra-parochial interest.

—Hollywood releases a movie featuring (the late, lamented) Edward R. Murrow and (the late, unlamented) Sen. Joe McCarthy. It is called *Good Night, and Good Luck*, and it portrays a famous broadcast denouncing McCarthy, shown in March 1954, on the eve of the Army-McCarthy hearings.

Murrow concluded his half-hour blast by inviting McCarthy to take the half-hour slot the following week to reply to Murrow's charges.

McCarthy's office advised CBS that the senator had decided to turn his half hour over to William Buckley to reply to Murrow. The film depicts this scene. William Paley, CBS boss, is leaving the office with Fred Friendly, Murrow's producer. "They want to give the time to William Buckley," Paley says. "I'm opposed." Friendly agrees.

—A few weeks have gone by since the film was released. In Stamford, Connecticut, on Saturday, Buckley is seen at a movie house watching *Good Night, and Good Luck*. "Are you going to comment on it?" a fellow viewer asks at the film's close. Buckley says, "I don't think so. I've written two books about McCarthy."

But the next day there are large headlines in the *Stamford Advocate*, which is co-sponsoring an evening featuring an award to Buckley by the distinguished Ferguson Library of Stamford, the first-ever Ferguson Award. It was 51 years ago that McCarthy named Buckley as best-equipped to answer Murrow, and now—tonight!!—he can do so in the heart of Stamford, Connecticut.

The evening is not designed to elicit my views on Murrow's views on McCarthy, but the *Stamford Advocate* is a newspaper, and perhaps will look me in the face before the evening is over and say: Well. What would you have said, in March 1954, if the cameras had rolled and you were talking back to Edward R. Murrow?

If that happens, I'll probably say that my own study of McCarthy ended with his activity in September 1953, that his fight with the Army, which was what the fracas was about in 1954—which got him censured, and which loosed Edward R. Murrow—was something else, that he had thrown restraint to one side, that he was deep in booze in those days and did some flatly inexcusable things, for instance his attack on General Zwicker.

But, if pressed, I'd have recalled that the current movie makes a heroine out of Annie Lee Moss, the black code clerk allegedly mistaken by McCarthy for another Annie Lee Moss, who was indeed a member of the Communist party. Never mind, what mattered in the current production was melodrama, and orderly thought bars chiasmic effects: McCarthy smeared the opposition/The opposition smeared McCarthy.

Murrow accomplished this mostly by camera manipulation. He had uniquely the skill to wrest the highest dramatic content out of any situation. There were the bad boys and the good boys; and he was the good boys' best boy on TV.

That half-hour on McCarthy was Murrow's most important show. At his death in 1965 all the obituary writers mentioned it, and the great courage it took to attack McCarthy—which certainly indicated that this is a nation whose people are courageous, since everybody was doing it, or at least everybody who counts. Everybody moral. And Edward R. Murrow was the most moral man on television, because he had the guts to show up Joe McCarthy for what he was. The lonely demurral came from the television critic for *The New Yorker*. He made the point that there wasn't anybody in the world you couldn't demolish by doing to him what Murrow did to McCarthy. If there were five million feet of film on St. Francis of Assisi, you could probably find a shot of him running away naked from his father's house (he did), and Murrow could prove he was an exhibitionist and a poseur (he affected to talk to the birds!).

I don't know what I'd have said on CBS, if cleared by management to come on. At this remove, one has only passing thoughts.

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MARK STEYN

DreamJerks

JUST in time for Christmas, Hollywood released a gay cowboy movie, *Brokeback Mountain*, whose very title sounds like a definition of unsafe sex. "Homo on the Range," as the jaunty headline writers of the Bay Area's *SF Weekly* called it, stars Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger as a couple of cowpokes who like to make . . . well, I was going to deploy Shakespeare and say "the beast with two backs," but I'm not sure that's the phrase. Maybe Roy Rogers could stroll on and sing "A Four-Legged Friend."

The point is: Is Hollywood out of its mind? Jake and Heath are the kind of male stars guys have no interest in and chicks dig as fantasy love objects—the rugged but sensitive type; they don't want to see them playing cowboys who can't wait to get into their chaps.

Of course, there's no end of other movies out there. There's *Syriana*, a film in which the CIA subverts a Middle Eastern government. Pardon me while I fall to the floor doubled up with laughter. If only the CIA were that good. The only government they seem the least bit capable of subverting is America's.

For decades, Hollywood's cranked out movies where the desperate guy is on the run and he uses a payphone at a dusty crossroads in the middle of Nebraska, and somewhere in Langley the spooks are listening in! He arranges to meet his contact by the newsstand of the concourse at Grand Central but the other fellow gets there early and goes into the men's room and mysteriously the toilet tank in Stall Three is packed with explosives, though the cops cover up and say it was because it was non-compliant with Al Gore federal cistern regulations.

And all this is total rubbish. The only fellows they're subverting are Hollywood, where circa 1972 they planted agents in deep deep cover at every studio to pump out movies revealing that, when anything odd happens anywhere on the planet, it's the Agency that's behind it. And Hollywood's happy to go along with the scam because the CIA, "big business," and Englishmen are the only villains you can have who don't have grievance-minded lobby groups who'll picket you and accuse you of "hate crimes." Gay villains, black villains, never mind Muslim terrorists—it's all more trouble than it's worth. Hence, the

Going for Brokeback

recent spate of thrillers set on planes in which the terrorist turns out to be the all-American WASPy guy or the stewardess or even the plane (*Stealth*).

And what's the upshot of all this? Well, DreamWorks has just been sold to Paramount. As the *Daily Telegraph* in London reported, "DreamWorks, founded in 1994, has had a series of costly flops this year despite its early successes with blockbusters such as *American Beauty* and *Saving Private Ryan*."

Hmm. Steven Spielberg's studio is going out in style, with *Munich*—a film about the PLO's murder of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympics. As the great director sees it, the problem is "intransigence" on both sides, which has led to a tragic "cycle of violence." "A response to a response doesn't really solve anything," he says. "There's been a quagmire of blood for blood for many decades in that region. Where does it end?"

Bye, bye, Steven. That's why we have "culture wars": Those who fancy themselves of an artistic bent recoil almost reflexively from the "simplistic," and so they take refuge in a sophistry that is itself laughably simplistic. The average Joe rightly recognizes this as a crock. In my experience, Americans aren't particularly predisposed toward Jews, but at a basic level they get the difference between the two sides—as Leon Wieseltier puts it, "the death of innocents was an Israeli mistake but a Palestinian objective." So all the artful symmetries Spielberg and his screenwriter Tony Kushner find between the men who killed the athletes and the men who killed the athlete-killers ring false to most of the potential audience. After all, even as the film was opening, the new president of Arafatistan, Abu Mazen, was signing off on a new law that rewards suicide bombers by providing a lifelong welfare check to their relicts. That's the difference.

Likewise, there are millions of Americans who reckon Islamism is a psychotic death cult with nothing to commend it, least of all if you happen to be a woman or a gay or an "artist," none of which liberal-approved groups prospered under Taliban rule.

If you're making ten straight cowboy movies, a gay one's neither here nor there. Similarly, if you've made ten movies in which Jake Gyllenhaal or Heath Ledger kick terrorist butt from here to Peshawar, there's plenty of room for a contrarian take in which it turns out to be the stewardesses who pulled off 9/11. But, in a conflict that's already lasted longer than America's participation in World War II, Hollywood still can't bring itself to make a film in which America's heroes whump America's enemies. That's just lousy business sense.

Which is one reason that DreamWorks flopped. Dreams may work, but hallucinations don't. And so Spielberg's no longer a mogul and his company is a subsidiary of Paramount—the non-brokeback mountain. As yet. **NR**

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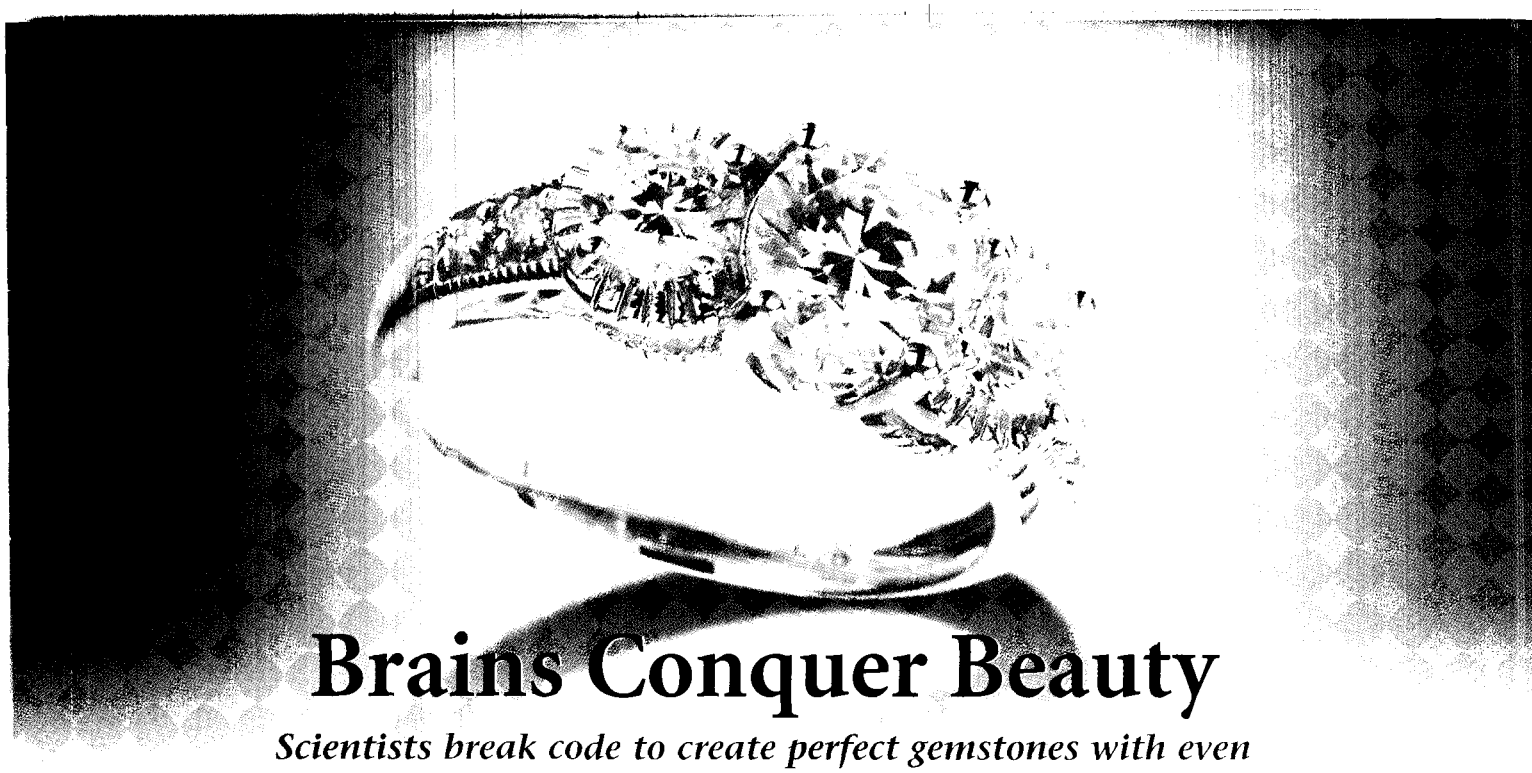

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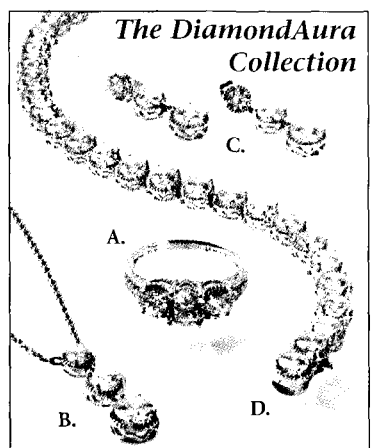

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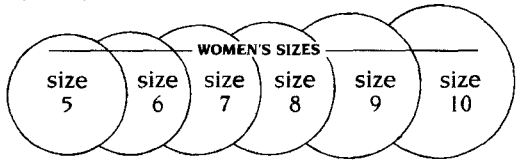

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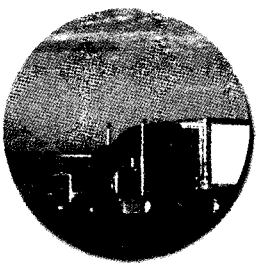

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